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Portrait of Tolstóy L

Etched by W. H. W. Bicknell from

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Illustrated Library Edition

CHILDHOOD
BOYHOOD · YOUTH
THE INCURSION
A LANDED PROPRIETOR
THE COSSACKS
SEVASTOPOL

By

COUNT LEV N. TOLSTÓY

Translated from the Original Russian
and edited by

PROFESSOR LEO WIENER

BOSTON

COLONIAL PRESS COMPANY
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TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

THE present new translation of Tolstóy has the following distinctive features:

The translator was born and educated in Russia, and the scenes and the life depicted, and the ideas evolved by the author, are familiar to him as to a native; on the other hand, his later youth and his manhood have been passed in America, where for twenty years he has taken active part in the educational and the literary movements of Anglo-Saxon life. Thus he is enabled correctly to interpret the workings of the greatest Russian mind both from the standpoint of a Russian and of an American. Still further to ensure literary accuracy, all the manuscript has been read by Miss Carrie A. Harper, herself an English authoress, whose advice has been invaluable to him.

The translator has treated the author with sympathetic love, which in many instances is due to a common bond of practices of life and of ideas: the translator is a vegetarian and teetotaler of even longer standing than the author, and shares his educational ideas both in theory and in practice. At the same time, the translator is absolutely free from any personal bias, and in dealing with Tolstóy brings to bear a critical spirit, born of the blending of the Russian and the Anglo-Saxon concepts of life.

No liberties are taken with either the language or the expression of the author's diction, which in unconscious artistic moments is sublimely poetical and sonorous, and

in the piling up of Cyclopean thoughts lacks the binding mortar. In such cases the translation leaves him in his original gigantic ruggedness. No attempt has been made to correct Tolstóy's style, which is so frequently practised by his other translators. The last volume will contain a sketch of Tolstóy's life and works, an analysis of all his productions, a complete index to his thoughts, a chronological table of the incidents in his life, and a bibliography of English, French, and German books and magazine articles dealing with all possible aspects of Tolstóy and his works. The copious illustrations accompanying the present translation are mainly from Russian sources, many of them rare, and invariably illustrate the scenes represented; wherever possible, existing illustrations to Tolstóy by native artists have been given.

The present translation contains everything given in the Russian complete edition published in Russia, with such authorized corrections of passages mutilated by the censor as have appeared abroad, and all the publications of Tolstóy's prohibited works which have appeared in Switzerland and in England. The only works omitted are those which Tolstóy himself translated from other languages. In the matter of text, the last reliable source has been given, the corrections in various instances reaching the translator just as the translations were going through the press. No attempt has been made to give older readings or readings mutilated by the censor, as the time for a critical edition has not yet come. Many of the manuscripts, in their correct form, were sent by Tolstóy to the Ryumántsev Museum, with the proviso that they be made public only ten years after his death; and the publications that have appeared abroad sometimes rest on unreliable manuscripts. The dates given for each production are not those of their publication (which will be given in the chronological table), but of their writing.

THE TRANSLATOR.

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CHILDHOOD

A Novel

1852

CHILDHOOD

I.

KARL IVÁNOVICH, OUR TEACHER

On the 12th of August, 18–, exactly two days after my birthday, when I was ten years old and received such wonderful presents, Karl Ivánovich woke me at seven o'clock in the morning by striking right over my head at a fly with a flap which was made of wrapping-paper attached to a stick. He did that so awkwardly that he set in motion the small picture of my guardian angel which was hanging on the oak headpiece of my bed, and made the dead fly fall straight upon my head. I stuck my nose out of my coverlet, stopped the swinging picture with my hand, threw the killed fly upon the ground, and with angry, though sleepy, eyes measured Karl Ivánovich. But he, dressed in a many-coloured wadded dressing-gown, which was girded by a belt of the same material, in a red hand-knit skull-cap with a tassel, and in soft goatskin boots, continued to make the round of the walls, and to aim and flap at flies.

"I'll admit I am a little fellow," thought I, "but why does he worry me? Why does he not kill flies over Volódya's bed? There are lots of them there! No, Volódya is older than I, and I am the youngest of all;

that's why he is tormenting me. All he is thinking about," whispered I, "is how to cause me annoyance. He knows quite well that he has waked and frightened me, but he acts as though he did not notice it. He is a contemptible fellow! And his dressing-gown, and cap, and tassel, — they are all contemptible!"

While I thus expressed in thought my disgust with Karl Iványovich, he walked up to his bed, took a look at the watch which was hanging above it in a hand-made shoe of glass beads, hung the flap on a nail, and, evidently in the pleasantest mood, turned to us.

"*Auf, Kinder, auf! 's ist Zeit. Die Mutter ist schon im Saal,*" he cried out in his good German voice, then came up to me, seated himself at my feet, and took his snuff-box out of his pocket. I pretended I was asleep. Karl Iványovich at first took a snuff, wiped his nose, snapped his fingers, and then turned his attention to me. He smiled and began to tickle the soles of my feet. "*Nun, nun, Faulenzer!*" said he.

Though I was very much afraid of tickling, I did not jump up from bed and did not answer him, but only hid my head farther under the pillows, kicked my feet with all my might, and made all possible efforts to keep from laughing.

"What a good man he is, and how he loves us, and how could I have thought so ill of him?"

I was angry at myself and at Karl Iványovich, and I wanted to laugh and cry at the same time; my nerves were shattered.

"*Ach, lassen Sie,* Karl Iványovich!" cried I, with tears in my eyes, and stuck my head out of my pillows.

Karl Iványovich was surprised, left my soles in peace, and with a disturbed mien began to ask what the matter was with me, and whether I had not had a bad dream. His good German face and the interest which he evinced in trying to ascertain the cause of my tears made them

flow more copiously; I felt ashamed, and I could not understand how a minute ago I could have disliked Karl Iványovich, and how I could have found his gown, his cap, and his tassel contemptible. Now, on the contrary, all those things appeared particularly charming to me, and even the tassel seemed to be an evident proof of his goodness.

I told him that I was crying because I had had a bad dream, that I dreamt mamma had died and was being buried. I had made up all that myself, because I really did not remember what it was I had dreamt about that night; but when Karl Iványovich, touched by my story, began to console me, it seemed to me that I had actually had such a terrible dream, and my tears began to flow, this time from an entirely different cause.

When Karl Iványovich left me, and I raised myself in bed and began to pull my stockings on my tiny legs, my tears flowed less abundantly, but the gloomy thoughts of my fictitious dream did not leave me. The children's valet, Nikoláy, entered the room. He was a small, neat man, always serious, accurate, respectful, and a great friend of Karl Iványovich. He was carrying our garments and shoes: for Volódya a pair of boots, and for me still the unbearable shoes with ribbons. I felt ashamed to cry in his presence. Besides, the morning sun shone merrily through the windows, and Volódya, who was mocking Márya Iványovna, my sister's governess, was laughing so merrily and loudly, as he stood at the wash-basin, that even solemn Nikoláy, with a towel over his shoulder, and with soap in one of his hands and the water-tank in the other, smiled and said:

"That will do, Vladímir Petróvich! Be pleased to wash yourself!"

I cheered up completely.

"*Sind Sie bald fertig?*" was heard the voice of Karl Iványovich from the study-room.

His voice was stern, and no longer had that expression of kindness which had touched me to tears. In the classroom Karl Iványovich was a different man: he was an instructor. I dressed in a hurry, washed myself, and, with the hair-brush in my hand, trying to smooth down my wet hair, made my appearance in response to his call.

Karl Iványovich had his spectacles on his nose and a book in his hands, and was seated in his usual place, between the door and the window. At the left of the door were two small shelves: one was ours, the children's, the other was his, Karl Iványovich's. On our shelf were all kinds of books, school-books and others: some of these were placed upright, others lay flat. Only two large volumes of the "Histoire des Voyages," in red bindings, were properly placed against the wall. Then followed long, fat, large, and small books, — bindings without books, and books without bindings. We used to stick and jam into it all kinds of things, when, just before recess, we were ordered to fix up the "library," as Karl Iványovich loudly called that shelf.

The collection of books on *his* shelf was not so large as ours, but it was much more varied. I remember three of them: a German pamphlet about the manuring of gardens for cabbage, — without a binding: one volume of a history of the Seven Years' War, — in parchment which was burned at one end; and a complete course of hydrostatics. Karl Iványovich used to pass the greater part of his time reading, and he had even impaired his eyesight in that way; but he never read anything else but these books and the *Northern Bee*.[1]

Among the objects which lay on Karl Iványovich's shelf, there was one which more than any other reminds me of him. It was a circle of cardboard, stuck in a wooden support, in which it moved, by means of pegs. Upon

[1] A periodical.

that circle was pasted a picture which represented a caricature of a lady and a hair-dresser. Karl Ivánovich was a good hand at pasting, and he had himself invented and made that circle in order to shield his weak eyes against the bright light.

Vividly I see before me the lank figure in the cotton dressing-gown and red cap, underneath which peep out scanty gray hairs. He is seated at the little table, upon which is placed the circle with the hair-dresser, that throws a shadow upon his face. In one hand he holds a book; his other is resting on the arm of the chair. Near him lies the watch with a chasseur painted on its face, a checkered handkerchief, a round black snuff-box, a green case for his glasses, and snuffers on a holder. All these things are lying so regularly and properly in their places, that by the order itself it is possible to conclude that Karl Ivánovich's conscience is pure and his soul at rest.

When we had run ourselves tired in the hall down-stairs, we used to steal up-stairs on tiptoes, into the study, and there we would see Karl Ivánovich sitting all alone in his armchair and with a calmly sublime expression reading one of his favourite books. There were moments when I caught him not reading: his spectacles were dropped lower on his large aquiline nose; his blue, half-closed eyes looked with a certain peculiar expression, and his lips smiled sadly. It was quiet in the room; one could hear only the even breathing and the ticking of the watch with the chasseur.

At times he did not notice me, while I stood at the door and thought: "Poor, poor old man! There are many of us: we are playing, we are happy; but he is all alone, and nobody comforts him. He is telling the truth when he says that he is an orphan. The history of his life is terrible, indeed! I remember his telling it to Nikoláy. It is terrible to be in his place!" And I would feel so

sorry for him, that I would go up to him, take his hand, and say: "*Lieber* Karl Iványovich!" He liked my speaking thus to him: he would pat me, and it was evident that he was touched.

Upon the other wall hung maps, nearly all of them torn, but skilfully pasted up by the hand of Karl Iványovich. On the third wall, in the middle of which was a door that led down-stairs, were hanging, on one side, two rulers: one, all cut up, belonged to us, the other, which was new, was *his*, and was used more for encouragement than for ruling; on the other side was a blackboard, on which our great transgressions were marked with circles, and our small ones with crosses. At the left of the board was the corner where we were made to kneel.

How well I remember that corner! I remember the valve in the stove, the ventilator in that valve, and the noise which it made whenever it was turned. When I had stood in the corner quite awhile, until my knees and back were aching, I thought: "Karl Iványovich has forgotten about me. He, no doubt, feels rested, sitting in a soft chair, and reading his Hydrostatics, but how about me?" And to make him think of me, I would softly open and close the valve, or scratch off some stucco from the wall; but if suddenly an unusually large piece fell upon the ground, — then, indeed, the fright it gave me was worse than any punishment. I looked at Karl Iványovich, — but he sat there with his book in his hand, as if he had not heard anything.

In the middle of the room stood a table which was covered with a torn black oilcloth, underneath which peeped out the edges that had been all cut up with penknives. Around the table were a few unpainted tabourets, which had assumed a gloss from long usage. The last wall was occupied by three windows. From these the following view was had: right below the windows was the road, every puddle, every pebble, and every rut of

which had long been familiar and dear to me; beyond the road lay an avenue of lopped linden-trees, and beyond that a wicker-fence could be seen in places; on the other side of the avenue appeared a meadow, on one side of which was a threshing-barn, and opposite it a forest; the hut of the watchman was visible far in the distance.

Through the window on the right was seen a part of the terrace where the grown people used to sit before dinner. At times, while Karl Iványovich was correcting the dictation sheet, I looked in that direction, and I saw my mother's black head and somebody's back, and I dimly heard some conversation and laughter. I felt angry because I could not be there, and I thought: "When I shall be grown, shall I stop studying and eternally reading the Dialogues? And shall I not be sitting with those I love?" Anger passed into sadness, and I fell to musing, God knows why or over what, so that I did not hear Karl Iványovich's angry words over my mistakes.

Karl Iványovich took off his dressing-gown, put on his blue uniform with elevations and gatherings at the shoulders, fixed his cravat before the mirror, and took us down-stairs, to bid mother good morning.

II.

MAMMA

MOTHER was sitting in the drawing-room and pouring out tea. With one hand she held the teapot, with the other the faucet of the samovár, from which the water ran over the teapot to the tray. Though she was looking fixedly at it, she did not notice it, nor that we had entered.

So many memories of the past rise before one, trying to resurrect in imagination the features of a beloved being, that one sees them dimly through these recollections as through tears. When I try to recall my mother as she was at that time, I can think only of her brown eyes, which always expressed the same kindness and love, of a birthmark upon her neck, a little below the place where the small hairs curled, of her white linen collar, of her tender dry hand which had so often fondled me, and which I had so often kissed; her general expression escapes me.

To the left of the sofa stood an old English grand piano. At the piano was seated my swarthy sister Lyúbochka, who with her rosy fingers that had just been washed in cold water was playing with evident expression Clementi's Etudes. She was eleven years old. She wore a short gingham dress and white, lace-bordered pantalets, and she could encompass octaves only by arpeggio. Near her, and half turned around, sat Márya Ivánovna, in a cap with rose-coloured ribbons, and wearing a blue jersey.

Her angry red face assumed a sterner expression the moment Karl Iványovich entered. She looked angrily at him and, without answering his greeting, continued to stamp her foot and to count: *un, deux, trois, un, deux, trois*, louder and more commandingly than before.

Karl Iványovich paid no attention whatsoever to it, and, as was his custom, with German politeness went straight up to take my mother's hand. She awoke from her reverie, shook her head, as if wishing to dispel her gloomy thoughts with that motion, gave her hand to Karl Iványovich, and kissed his furrowed temple, while he was kissing her hand.

"*Ich danke, lieber* Karl Iványovich!" and continuing to speak German, she asked him whether the children had slept well.

Karl Iványovich was deaf in one ear, and just then he could hear nothing because of the noise at the piano. He bent lower down to the sofa, leaned with one arm against the table, while standing on one foot, and with a smile, which then appeared to me the acme of refinement, lifted his cap on his head and said:

"Excuse me, Natályа Nikoláevna!"

Not to catch a cold, Karl Iványovich never took off his red cap, but every time he entered the sitting-room, he asked permission to keep it on.

"Put it on, Karl Iványovich. I am asking you whether the children have slept well," said mamma, quite aloud, as she moved up to him.

But he again had not heard anything. He covered his bald head with his red cap, and smiled even more sweetly.

"Stop a minute, Mimi," said mamma to Márya Ivánovna, smiling. "One can't hear a thing."

Whenever mother smiled, her face, which was very pretty, became even more beautiful, and everything around her seemed to grow happier. If, in the heavy moments of my life, I had been able to see that smile,

even in passing, I should not have known what grief is. It seems to me that in the smile alone is contained that which is called the beauty of the face: if the smile adds charm to the face, the face is beautiful; if it does not change it, it is common; if it spoils it, it is homely.

Having greeted me, mamma took my head with both her hands, and threw it back, then looked fixedly at me, and said:

"You have been crying to-day?"

I did not answer. She kissed my eyes, and asked in German:

"What were you crying about?"

Whenever she spoke to us in a friendly manner, she spoke in that language, which she had mastered perfectly.

"I had been crying in my dream, mamma," said I, as I recalled the fictitious dream with all its details and involuntarily shuddered at the thought.

Karl Iványovich confirmed my words, but kept silent about the dream. Having said something about the weather, in which conversation Mimi, too, took part, mamma placed six pieces of sugar on the tray for some especially honoured servants, then arose and walked up to the embroidery-frame which stood near the window.

"Well, go now to papa, children, and tell him to be sure and come to see me before he goes to the threshing-floor."

The music, the counting, and the stern glances began anew, and we went to papa. After passing the room which from grandfather's time had preserved the name of *officiating-room*, we entered his study.

III.

PAPA

He was standing near the writing-table and, pointing to some envelopes, papers, and heaps of money, was speaking excitedly about something to steward Yákov Mikháylovich, who was standing in his customary place, between the door and the barometer, with his hands behind his back, rapidly moving his fingers in all directions.

The more excitedly father spoke, the more rapidly his fingers twitched, and, again, when father stopped speaking, his fingers ceased moving; but when Yákov himself began to speak his fingers came into the greatest commotion and desperately jumped on all sides. It seems to me one could have guessed Yákov's secret thoughts by their motion. But his face was quiet, and expressed the consciousness of his dignity and at the same time of his subserviency, as much as to say: "I am right; however, as you may wish it!"

When papa saw us, he only said:

"Wait a moment."

With a motion of his head he pointed to the door, which he wanted some one of us to close.

"Oh, merciful Lord! What is the matter with you to-day, Yákov?" continued he to the steward, twitching his shoulders, which was a habit of his. "This envelope with the enclosed eight hundred roubles —"

Yákov moved up the abacus, cast 800 upon it, and

fixed his eyes upon an indefinite point, waiting for things to follow.

"— are for farm expenses during my absence. You understand? For the mill you are to get one thousand roubles — is it not so? You will get back deposits from the treasury, eight thousand roubles; for the hay, of which, according to your own calculation, we ought to sell seven thousand puds, — let me say at forty-five kopeks, — you will receive three thousand roubles; consequently, how much money will you have in all? Twelve thousand, — am I not right?"

"Just so, sir," said Yákov.

But I noticed by the rapidity with which his fingers moved that he was about to retort something. Papa interrupted him.

"Well, from these moneys you will send ten thousand to the Council for the Petróvskoe estate. Now, the money which is in the office," continued papa (Yákov had disturbed the former 12,000, and now cast 21,000 on his abacus), "you will bring to me, and you will write it down among the expenses of this date." (Yákov mixed up the accounts and turned over the abacus, no doubt wishing to say by this that the 21,000 would be equally lost.) "But this envelope with the enclosed money you will deliver in my name according to the address."

I was standing near the table and looked at the inscription. It ran: "To Karl Iványch Mauer."

Evidently noticing that I had read what I ought not to know, papa placed his hand upon my shoulder, and with a slight motion indicated a direction away from the table. I did not understand whether that was a favour or a reprimand, but in any case kissed his large venous hand which lay upon my shoulder.

"At your service, sir," said Yákov. "And what is your order in regard to the Khabárovka money?"

Khabárovka was mother's estate.

"Leave it in the office, and never use it without my order."

Yákov was silent for a few moments; then suddenly his fingers began to move with increased rapidity, and, changing the expression of submissive stupidity with which he listened to his master's commands, into one of shrewd cunning, which was peculiar to him, he moved the abacus up to him, and began to speak.

"Permit me to report to you, Peter Alekséndrovich, that your will shall be done, but it is impossible to pay into the Council at the proper time. You have deigned to say," continued he, speaking more slowly, "that money is due from the deposits, the mill, and the hay." (As he mentioned these items, he cast them on the abacus.) "But I am afraid we may have made a mistake in our calculations," he added, after a short silence, and looking thoughtfully at papa.

"Why?"

"Permit me to show you: as to the mill, the miller has come to see me twice to ask for a delay; he swore by Christ that he had no money, and he is here even now; perhaps you would be pleased to speak to him yourself?"

"What does he say?" asked papa, making a sign with his head that he did not wish to speak with the miller.

"The same old thing! He says that there has been no grinding at all, that all the money he had he put into a dam. What advantage would there be for us, sir, to push him for it? As to the deposits, which you mentioned, it seems to me I already have reported that our money is stuck fast there, and that it will not be so easy to get it soon. I only lately sent to town a wagon of flour to Iván Afanásich, and with it a note in regard to this matter: he answered that it would give him pleasure to do something for Peter Aleksándrych, but that the affair was not in his hands, and that, according to appearances,

the receipt would not be delivered for two months yet. In regard to the hay you have deigned to remark, suppose even we shall get three thousand roubles — "

He cast 3,000 on the abacus and kept silent for about a minute, looking now at the abacus, now into father's eyes, as much as to say:

"You see yourself how little that is! And the hay, again, will have to be sold first; if we were to sell it now, you can see for yourself — "

He evidently had still a great supply of proofs; it was, no doubt, for this reason that papa interrupted him.

"I sha'n't change my order," said he; "but if there will really be a delay in the receipt of the money, then we can't help ourselves, and you will take as much money of the Khabárovka estate as will be necessary."

"Your servant, sir!"

By Yákov's expression of face and by his fingers one could tell that this latter order afforded him a great pleasure.

Yákov was a serf, but a very zealous and devoted man. Like all good stewards, he was extremely close-fisted for his master, and had the strangest conceptions about his master's advantages. He eternally schemed for the increase of his master's property at the expense of that of his mistress, and tried to prove that it was necessary to use all the income from her estates for the Petróvskoe village, where we were living. He was triumphant at this moment, because he had been completely successful.

Having bid us good morning, papa told us that we had been long enough frittering our time away in the village, that we were no longer babies, and that it was time for us to begin studying in earnest.

"I think you know already that I am this very evening going to Moscow, and that I shall take you with me," said he. "You will be living with grandmother, and mamma will stay here with the girls. And remember

this: her only consolation will be to hear that you are studying well and that people are satisfied with you."

Although from the preparations which had been going on for several days we expected something unusual, yet this news gave us a terrible shock. Volódya blushed and with a trembling voice gave him mother's message.

"So this is what my dream foreboded!" thought I. "God grant only that nothing worse may happen."

I was very sorry for mother; at the same time the thought that we were now grown gave me pleasure.

"If we are to travel to-day, there will be no classes: that is glorious!" thought I. "However, I am sorry for Karl Ivánovich. He will, no doubt, be dismissed, or else they would not have fixed an envelope for him. It would be better, after all, to study all our lives and not to go away, not to leave mother, and not to offend poor Karl Ivánovich. He is unfortunate enough without it!"

These thoughts flashed through my head: I did not budge from the spot, and fixed my eyes on the black ribbons of my shoes.

My father said a few words to Karl Ivánovich about the falling of the barometer, and ordered Yákov not to feed the dogs, so that before his leave-taking he might go out in the afternoon and listen to the baying of the young hounds. Contrary to my expectation he sent us back to study, consoling us, however, with a promise to take us out on the hunt.

On my way up-stairs I ran out on the terrace. At the door lay father's favourite greyhound, Mílka, blinking her eyes in the sun.

"Dear Mílka," said I, patting her and kissing her mouth, "we are going away to-day. Good-bye! We shall never see each other again."

I was agitated, and I began to weep.

IV.

THE LESSONS

KARL IVÁNOVICH was not at all in humour. That was evident from his knit brow, from the manner with which he threw his coat into the drawer, from his girding himself angrily, and from his making a deep mark with his thumb in the book of Dialogues, in order to indicate the place to which we were to memorize.

Volódya studied pretty well, but I was so disconcerted that I could do absolutely nothing. I looked for a long time senselessly into the book of Dialogues, but I could not read through the tears which had gathered in my eyes at the thought of the impending departure. But when the time came to recite the Dialogues to Karl Iványovich, who listened to me with half-closed eyes (that was a bad sign), — particularly when I reached the place where one says, "*Wo kommen Sie her?*" and the other answers: "*Ich komme vom Kaffeehause,*" I could no longer restrain my tears, and through my sobs could not pronounce: "*Haben Sie die Zeitung nicht gelesen?*" When we reached penmanship, my tears that fell on the paper made blotches as if I were writing on wrapping-paper.

Karl Iványovich grew angry, put me on my knees, insisted that it was nothing but stubbornness and a puppet-show (that was his favourite expression), threatened me with the ruler, and demanded that I should ask forgiveness, though I could not pronounce a word through my tears. In the end, he evidently felt that he was unjust

and went away into Nikoláy's room, slamming the door after him.

In the class-room we could hear the conversation in the valet's room.

"Have you heard, Nikoláy, that the children are going to Moscow?" said Karl Ivánovich, as he entered the room.

"Indeed, I have."

Nikoláy, it seems, was on the point of rising, because Karl Ivánovich said: "Keep your seat, Nikoláy!" and immediately after closed the door. I left my corner and went to the door to listen.

"No matter how much good you may do to people, no matter how attached you may be, you evidently cannot expect any gratitude, Nikoláy?" said Karl Ivánovich, with feeling.

Nikoláy, who was sitting at the window, cobbling away at a boot, nodded his head in affirmation.

"I have been living in this house these fifteen years, and I can say before God, Nikoláy," continued Karl Ivánovich, raising his eyes and his snuff-box toward the ceiling, "that I have loved them and have worked with them more than if they were my own children. You remember, Nikoláy, when Volódenka had the fever, how I sat for nine days by his bed, without closing my eyes. Yes! when I was good, dear Karl Ivánovich, I was needed, but now," added he, smiling ironically, "now *the children have grown, and they must study in earnest.* As if they were not studying here, Nikoláy!"

"I should say they were, it seems!" said Nikoláy, putting down the awl, and pulling through the waxed thread with both his hands.

"Yes, I am superfluous now, so I am sent away; but where are the promises? where is the gratitude? I respect and love Natálya Nikoláevna, Nikoláy," said he, putting his hand on his breast, "but what is she? Her

will has as much power in this house as this!" saying which, he with an expressive mien threw upon the floor a chip of leather. "I know whose tricks they are, and why I am superfluous now; it is because I do not flatter and approve everything, as *other people* do. I am in the habit of speaking the truth at all times and to everybody," said he, proudly. "God be with them! They will not grow rich by not having me here, and I, God is merciful, will find a piece of bread somewhere. Am I right, Nikoláy?"

Nikoláy raised his head and looked at Karl Ivánovich, as if he wanted to assure himself that he would really be able to find a piece of bread, but he did not say anything.

Karl Ivánovich spoke much and long in that strain; he told of how his services had been much better appreciated at some general's, where he used to live (that pained me very much), he told of Saxony, of his parents, of his friend, tailor Schönheit, and so forth.

I sympathized with his sorrow, and I felt pained because my father and Karl Ivánovich, whom I respected about equally, did not understand each other; I again betook myself to my corner, sat down on my heels, and began to consider how to restore the right understanding between them.

When Karl Ivánovich returned to the class-room, he ordered me to get up, and to prepare the copy-book for dictation. When everything was ready, he majestically fell back into his chair, and in a voice which seemed to issue from some depth began to dictate as follows: "'*Von al-len Lei-den-schaf-ten die grau-sam-ste ist*' — *haben Sie geschrieben?*" Here he stopped, slowly snuffed some tobacco, and continued with renewed strength: "'*Die grausamste ist, die Un-dank-bar-keit*' — *ein grosses U.*" Having finished the last word, and in expectation of something to follow, I looked at him.

"*Punctum,*" said he, with a barely perceptible smile,

and made a sign that we should hand him our copy-books.

He read that motto several times, with various intonations and with an expression of the greatest satisfaction. The motto expressed his innermost thought. Then he gave us a lesson from history, and seated himself at the window. His face was not as stern as before; it expressed the satisfaction of a man who had in a fitting manner avenged the insult which had been offered him.

It was fifteen minutes to one, but Karl Ivánovich did not even think of dismissing us; he continued giving us new lessons. Ennui and appetite grew in the same proportion. With the greatest impatience I followed all the tokens which indicated the nearness of the dinner. There was the peasant woman going with a mop to wash the dishes; there the rattle of the plates was heard in the butler's room; the table was drawn out and chairs were placed; and there Mimi was coming from the garden with Lyúbochka and Kátenka (Kátenka was the twelve-year-old daughter of Mimi), but Fóka was not yet to be seen, servant Fóka, who always came and announced that dinner was served. Only then would we be allowed to throw aside our books and run down, without paying any heed to Karl Ivánovich.

Steps were heard on the staircase, but that was not Fóka. I had studied his walk, and always could recognize the creak of his boots. The door opened, and an entirely unfamiliar figure made its appearance.

V.

THE SAINTLY FOOL

INTO the room entered a man of about fifty years of age, with a pale, pock-marked, oval face, long gray hair, and a scanty reddish beard. He was so tall that, in order to enter, he had to bend not only his head, but his whole body. He was dressed in something torn that resembled a caftan and a cassock; in his hand he held a huge staff. As he entered the room, he with all his might struck the floor with it, and, furrowing his brow and opening his mouth beyond measure, laughed out in a most terrible and unnatural manner. One of his eyes was maimed, and the white pupil of that eye kept on leaping about and giving to his otherwise ugly face a more disgusting expression.

"Aha, caught!" he cried out, running up to Volódya with mincing steps, getting hold of his head, and beginning carefully to examine his crown. Then he walked away from him with an entirely solemn expression on his face, stepped to the table, and began to blow under the oilcloth and to make the sign of the cross over it.

"Oh, a pity! Oh, painful! Dear ones — will fly away," said he then, in a voice quivering with tears, feelingly looking at Volódya, and beginning with his sleeves to wipe off the tears which had really started to fall.

His voice was rough and hoarse, his motions hasty and uneven, his speech senseless and incoherent (he never used any pronouns), but the accents were so touching, and his yellow, maimed face at times assumed such an expres-

sion of sincere sorrow, that, hearing him, it was not possible to abstain from a certain mingled feeling of pity, fear, and sadness.

That was the saintly fool and pilgrim, Grísha.

Whence did he come? Who were his parents? What had incited him to choose the pilgrim's life which he was leading? Nobody knew that. I only know that he had been known as a saintly fool ever since his fifteenth year, that he walked barefoot in summer and winter, that he visited monasteries, presented images to those he took a fancy to, and spoke mysterious words which some regarded as prophecies, that no one had ever known him otherwise, that he at times called on grandmother, and that some said that he was the unfortunate son of rich parents, but a pure soul, while others maintained that he was simply a peasant and a lazy man.

At last long-wished-for and punctual Fóka appeared, and we went down-stairs. Grísha, sobbing and continuing to utter incoherent words, went down after us, and struck the steps with his staff. Papa and mamma were walking hand in hand in the living-room, and discussing something. Márya Ivánovna sat stiffly in an armchair, which symmetrically adjoined the sofa at right angles, and in a stern, though reserved voice, gave instructions to the girls, who were sitting near her.

The moment Karl Ivánovich entered the room, she glanced at him, immediately turned away, and her face assumed an expression which may be rendered by, "I do not notice you, Karl Ivánovich." We could read in the eyes of the girls that they were anxious to transmit to us some very important information, but it would have been a transgression of Mimi's rules to jump up from their seats and come to us. We had first to walk up to her, to say "*Bonjour*, Mimi!" to scuff, and then only we were permitted to enter into a conversation.

What an intolerable person that Mimi was! In her

presence it was not possible to speak about anything; she found everything improper. Besides, she continually nagged us, "*Parlez donc français,*" every time we, as if to spite her, wanted to chat in Russian; or, at dinner, we would just get the taste of some dish and would not want to be interrupted by any one, when she would burst in with "*Mangez donc avec du pain,*" or "*Comment-ce que vous tenez votre fourchette?*" "What business has she with us?" we would think. "Let her teach the girls; we have Karl Ivánovich for that." I absolutely shared his hatred of *other people.*

"Ask mamma to take us out to the hunt," said Kátenka, in a whisper, stopping me by my blouse, when the grown people had entered the dining-room.

"All right, we shall try."

Grísha dined in the dining-room, but at a separate table. He did not raise his eyes from his plate, but now and then sobbed, made terrible grimaces, and kept on saying, as if to himself, "A pity! flown away — the dove has flown to heaven — Oh, there is a stone on the grave!" and so on.

Mamma had been out of humour since morning: the presence, words and acts of Grísha perceptibly intensified that feeling in her.

"Oh, yes, I almost forgot to ask you for one thing," said she, as she passed a plate of soup to father.

"What is it?"

"Please have your awful dogs locked up; they almost bit poor Grísha to death as he crossed the yard. They might attack the children some day."

When Grísha heard them speaking about him, he turned toward the table, began to show the torn corners of his garment, and munching, said:

"Wanted to kill. God did not let. A sin to hunt with dogs, a great sin! Strike no big ones, why strike? God will forgive, different days."

"What is he talking about?" asked papa, sharply

and severely surveying him. "I do not understand a word."

"But I understand," answered mamma. "He is telling me that a certain hunter had on purpose urged the dogs against him, and so he says, 'Wanted to kill but God did not let,' and he is asking you not to punish the hunter."

"Oh, that's it?" said papa. "But how does he know that I had intended to punish the hunter? You know, I am not at all fond of these gentlemen," he continued in French, "but this one is especially objectionable to me, and, no doubt —"

"Oh, do not say that, my dear," mamma interrupted him, as if frightened at something, "how do you know?"

"It seems to me I have had occasion to become acquainted with his tribe, — there are a lot of them coming to see you, they are all of the same pattern. Always one and the same story."

It was evident mamma was of an entirely different opinion in regard to that matter, and did not wish to discuss it.

"Hand me that pasty, if you please," said she. "Are they good to-day?"

"No, I am angry," continued papa, taking the pasty in his hand, but holding it at such a distance that mamma could not reach it, "no, I am angry whenever I see intelligent and cultivated people given to such deception."

And he struck the table with his fork.

"I have asked you to hand me the pasty," repeated she, extending her hand.

"They are doing just right," continued papa, moving his hand away, "when they put them in jail. The only good they do is to destroy the otherwise weak nerves of certain persons," added he, with a smile, as he noticed that this conversation did not please mamma. Then he handed her the pasty.

"I shall reply only this much to you: it is hard to be-

lieve that a man who, in spite of his sixty years, in summer and winter walks barefoot, and uninterruptedly wears under his garments chains of two puds in weight, and who more than once has declined the proposition to live in peace and contentment, — it is hard to believe that such a man should be doing it all out of laziness. As to the prophecies," she added, with a sigh and after a short silence, "*je suis payée pour y croire*, it seems to me, I have told you how Kiryúsha foretold papa's death to him to the very hour and day."

"Oh, what have you done with me?" said papa, smiling and placing his hand to his mouth on the side where Mimi was sitting. (Whenever he did so, I listened with redoubled attention, expecting something funny.) "Why did you remind me of his feet? I have looked at them, and now I sha'n't eat anything."

The dinner was coming to an end. Lyúbochka and Kátenka kept on winking to us, moving restlessly in their chairs, and, in general, showing great anxiety. This winking meant, "Why do you not ask to take us to the hunt?" I nudged Volódya with my elbow. Volódya nudged me, and finally took courage; at first speaking in a timid voice, then more firmly and loudly, he declared that, as we were to depart to-day, we should like to have the girls go with us to the hunt, in the carriage. After a short consultation between the grown people, the question was decided in our favour, and, what was even more agreeable, mamma said she would herself go with us.

VI.

PREPARATION FOR THE HUNT

YÁKOV was called during the dessert and orders were given in regard to the carriage, the dogs, and the saddle-horses, — all this with the minutest details, calling each horse by its name.

As Volódya's horse was lame, papa ordered a hunter's horse to be saddled for him. This word, "hunter's horse," somehow sounded strange in mamma's ears; it seemed to her that a hunter's horse must be some kind of a ferocious animal, which must by all means run away with and kill Volódya. In spite of the assurance of papa and of Volódya, who said with remarkable pluck that it was all nothing and that he was very fond of being carried rapidly by a horse, poor mamma continued saying that she should be worrying during the whole picnic.

The dinner came to an end. The grown people went into the cabinet to drink coffee, and we ran into the garden, to scuff along the paths, which were covered with fallen yellow leaves, and to have a chat. We began to talk about Volódya's riding on a hunter's horse, about its being a shame that Lyúbochka did not run so fast as Kátenka, about its being interesting to get a look at Grísha's chains, and so on, but not a word was said of our departure. Our conversation was interrupted by the rattle of the approaching carriage, on each spring of which a village boy was seated. Behind the carriage followed the hunters with their dogs, and behind the hunters, coachman

Ignát, riding on the horse which was intended for Volódya, and leading my old nag by the hand. At first we all rushed to the fence, from which all these interesting things could be seen, and then we all ran up-stairs shouting and rattling, to get dressed, and to get dressed in such a manner as to resemble hunters most. One of the chief means for obtaining that end was to tuck our pantalcons into our boots. We betook ourselves to that work without any loss of time, hastening to get done as soon as possible and to run out on the veranda, to enjoy the sight of the dogs and of the horses, and to have a chat with the hunters.

It was a hot day. White, fantastic clouds had appeared in the horizon early in the morning; then a soft breeze began to drive them nearer and nearer, so that at times they shrouded the sun. Though the clouds moved about and grew dark, it was, evidently, not fated that they should gather into a storm-cloud and break up our last enjoyment. Toward evening they again began to scatter: they grew paler, lengthened out, and ran down to the horizon; others, above our very heads, changed into white, transparent scales; only one large, black cloud hovered somewhere in the east. Karl Iványovich always knew whither each cloud went. He announced that that cloud would go to Máslovka, that there would be no rain, and that the weather would be fine.

Fóka, in spite of his declining years, very nimbly and rapidly ran down-stairs, called out, "Drive up!" and, spreading his feet, planted himself in the middle of the driveway, between the place where the coachman was to drive up the carriage and the threshold, in the attitude of a man who need not be reminded of his duties. The ladies came down, and after a short discussion where each one was to sit, and to whom each one was to hold on (though, it seemed to me, there was no need at all to hold on), they seated themselves, opened their parasols, and started. As the carriage moved off, mamma pointed to the

"hunter's horse" and asked the coachman with a quivering voice:

"Is this horse for Vladímir Petróvich?"

When the coachman answered in the affirmative, she waved her hand and turned away. I was in great impatience. I mounted my pony, looked between its ears, and made all kinds of evolutions in the yard.

"Please not to crush the dogs," said a hunter to me.

"Have no fear, this is not my first time," answered I, proudly.

Volódya seated himself on the "hunter's horse" not without a certain trembling, in spite of the firmness of his character, and, patting it, asked several times:

"Is it a gentle horse?"

He looked very well on a horse, just like a grown person. His tightly stretched thighs lay so well on the saddle that I was envious, because, as far as I could judge by the shadow, I did not make such a fine appearance.

Then papa's steps were heard on the staircase. The dog-keeper collected the hounds that had run ahead. The hunters with their greyhounds called up their dogs, and all mounted their horses. The groom led a horse up to the veranda. The dogs of father's leash, that had been lying before in various artistic positions near the horse, now rushed up to him. Mílka ran out after him, in a beaded collar, tinkling her iron clapper. Whenever she came out, she greeted the dogs of the kennel; with some of them she played, others she scented or growled at, and on others, again, she looked for fleas.

Papa mounted his horse, and we started.

VII.

THE HUNT

TÚRKA, the Chief Hunter, rode ahead of us, on a gray, hook-nosed horse. He wore a shaggy cap, and had a huge horn on his shoulders and a hunting-knife in his belt. From the gloomy and ferocious exterior of that man one would have concluded that he was going to a mortal conflict rather than to a hunt. At the hind feet of his horse ran, in a motley, wavering mass, the hounds, in close pack. It was a pity to see what fate befell the unfortunate hound that took it into his head to drop behind. In order to do so, he had to pull his companion with all his might, and whenever he accomplished it, one of the dog-keepers who rode behind struck him with his hunting-whip, calling out, "Back to the pack!" When he rode out of the gate, papa ordered the hunters and us to ride on the road, but he himself turned into the rye-field.

The harvesting was in full blast. The immeasurable, bright yellow field was closed in only on one side by a tall, bluish forest which then appeared to me as a most distant and mysterious place, beyond which either the world came to an end, or uninhabitable countries began. The whole field was filled with sheaves and men. Here and there, in the high, thick rye, could be seen, in a reaped swath, the bent form of a reaping woman, the swinging of the ears as she drew them through her

fingers; a woman in the shade, bending over a cradle; and scattered stacks in the stubble-field that was overgrown with bluebottles. Elsewhere peasants in nothing but shirts, standing on carts, were loading the sheaves, and raising the dust on the dry, heated field. The village elder, in boots and with a camel-hair coat over his shoulders, and notched sticks in his hand, having noticed us in the distance, doffed his lambskin cap, wiped off his red-haired head and beard with a towel, and called out loud to the women. The sorrel horse on which papa was riding went at a light, playful canter, now and then dropping his head to his breast, drawing out his reins, and switching off with his heavy tail the horseflies and gnats that eagerly clung to him.

Two greyhounds, bending their tails tensely in the shape of a sickle and lifting their legs high, gracefully leaped over the high stubble, behind the feet of the horse; Milka ran in front and, bending her head, waited to be fed. The conversation of the people, the tramp of the horses, the rattle of the carts, the merry piping of the quails, the buzzing of the insects that hovered in the air in immovable clouds, the odour of wormwood, of straw, and of horses' sweat, thousands of various flowers and of shadows which the burning sun spread over the light-yellow stubble-field, over the blue distance of the forest, and over the light, lilac clouds, the white cobwebs that were borne in the air or that lodged upon the stubbles, — all that I saw, heard, and felt.

When we reached the Viburnum Forest, we found the carriage there and, above all expectation, another one-horse vehicle, in the midst of which sat the butler. Through the hay peeped a samovár, a pail with an ice-cream freezer, and a few attractive bundles and boxes. There was no mistaking; we were to have tea, ice-cream, and fruit in the open. At the sight of the vehicle we expressed a noisy delight, because it was regarded as a

great pleasure to drink tea in the woods, on the grass, and, in general, in a spot where no one ever drank tea.

Túrka rode up to the grove, stopped, attentively listened to papa's minute instructions as to where to line up and where to come out (however, he never complied with these instructions, but did as he thought best), unloosed the dogs, fixed the braces, mounted his horse, and, whistling, disappeared behind the young birch-trees. The loosed hounds first expressed their pleasure by wagging their tails, then shook themselves, straightened themselves, and, scenting their way and shaking their tails, ran in different directions.

"Have you a handkerchief?" asked papa.

I took it out of my pocket and showed it to him.

"Well, so, take this gray dog on your handkerchief."

"Zhirán?" said I, with the look of a connoisseur.

"Yes! and run along the road. When you come to a clearing, stop. And look out; do not come back to me without a hare!"

I tied my handkerchief around Zhirán's shaggy neck, and ran headlong to the place indicated. Papa laughed and cried after me:

"Hurry up, hurry up, or you will be late!"

Zhirán kept stopping all the time, pricking his ears, and listening to the calls of the hunters. I did not have enough strength to pull him off, and I began to cry, "Atú! atú!" Then Zhirán tugged so hard that I barely could hold him back and fell down several times before I could reach the place. Having found a shady, level spot at the foot of a tall oak-tree, I lay down in the grass, placed Zhirán near me, and began to wait. My imagination, as generally happens under such circumstances, far outran the actual facts; I imagined that I was baiting the third hare, whereas it was only the first hound that was heard in the woods. Túrka's voice was heard through the forest ever louder and more animated;

the hound whimpered, and his voice was heard more frequently; a second, bass voice joined it, then a third, a fourth. These voices now grew silent, now interrupted each other. The sounds grew in volume and became less irregular, and finally ran together into one hollow, long-drawn tone. The grove was rich in echoes, and the hounds bayed incessantly.

When I heard that, I remained as if petrified in my place. Fixing my eyes on the clearing, I smiled meaninglessly; the perspiration coursed down my face in a stream, and, though its drops, running over my cheek, tickled me, I did not wipe them off. It seemed to me that there could be nothing more decisive than this moment. The strain of this intent feeling was too great to last long. The hounds now bayed at the very clearing, now kept on receding from me. There was no hare. I began to look around me. The same mood seemed to possess Zhirán; at first he tugged to get away and whimpered; then he lay down near me, placed his snout on my knees, and grew quiet.

Near the bared roots of that oak-tree, under which I was sitting, ants were swarming over the gray, dry earth, between the dry oak leaves, acorns, dried up, lichen-covered sticks, yellowish green moss and the thin blades of grass that peeped through here and there. They were hastening, one after the other, along the foot-paths which they had laid out: some of them went with burdens, others without burdens. I took a stick in my hand and barred their way. It was a sight to see how some of them, despising the danger, crawled under the obstacle, while others crept over it; and some, especially those that were with burdens, were completely lost, and did not know what to do: they stopped, looked for a way round, or turned back, or climbing over the stick reached my hand and, it seemed, were trying to get in the sleeve of my blouse. I was distracted from these interesting

observations by a butterfly with yellow wings that enticingly circled about me. The moment I directed my attention to it, it flew away some two steps from me, hovered above an almost withered white flower of wild clover, and alighted upon it. I do not know whether the sun warmed the butterfly, or whether it was drinking the juice of that flower, — in any case, it was evidently happy there. It now and then flapped its wings and pressed close to the flower; finally it remained perfectly quiet. I put my head on both my hands, and looked with delight at the butterfly.

Suddenly Zhirán began to whine, and he tugged with such strength that I almost fell down. I looked around. At the edge of the forest leaped a hare, one of his ears lying flat and the other standing erect. The blood rushed to my head and I, forgetting myself for the moment, cried something in an unnatural voice, let the dog go, and started to run myself. No sooner had I done that, than I began to feel remorse; the hare squatted, took a leap, and I never saw him again.

But what was my shame when Túrka appeared from behind a bush, in the wake of the hounds that with one voice made for the open! He had seen my mistake (which was that I *did not hold out*), and, looking contemptuously at me, he said only: "Ah, master!" But you should have heard how he said it! I should have felt better if he had hung me from his saddle like a hare.

I stood long in the same spot in great despair, did not call the dog back, and only kept on repeating, striking my thighs:

"O Lord, what have I done!"

I heard the hounds coursing away; I heard them beating at the other end of the grove, and driving the hare, and Túrka blowing his huge horn and calling the dogs, — but I did not budge.

VIII.

GAMES

THE hunt was ended. A rug was spread in the shade of young birch-trees, and the whole company seated themselves on it. Butler Gavrílo had stamped down the juicy green grass around him, and was wiping the plates and taking out of a box plums and peaches that were wrapped in leaves. The sun shone through the green branches of the birches, and cast round, quivering bits of light on the patterns of the rug, on my feet, and even on the bald, perspiring head of Gavrílo. A light breeze that blew through the leafage of the trees, and over my hair and perspiring face, greatly refreshed me.

When we had received our shares of ice-cream and fruit, there was nothing else to do on the rug, and we arose, in spite of the burning, oblique rays of the sun, and went away to play.

"Well, what shall it be?" said Lyúbochka, blinking from the sun and hopping about on the grass. "Let us play Robinson."

"No, that is tiresome," said Volódya, lazily throwing himself on the grass and chewing at some leaves, "that everlasting Robinson! If you want to play something, let us rather build an arbour."

Volódya evidently was playing the great gentleman: he, no doubt, was proud of having come on a hunter's horse, and he pretended he was very tired. But, on the other hand, he may have had too much common sense

and too little imagination to take complete enjoyment in the game of Robinson. The game consisted in performing scenes from the "Swiss Family Robinson," which we had lately read.

"Well, why, pray, do you not want to give us that pleasure?" insisted the girls. "You may be Charles, or Ernest, or the father, — whichever you wish," said Kátenka, trying to raise him from the ground by the sleeve of his blouse.

"Really, I don't feel like it, it is tiresome!" said Volódya, stretching himself and at the same time smiling with self-satisfaction.

"I should have preferred to stay at home, if nobody wants to play," said Lyúbochka, through tears.

She was a great blubberer.

"Well, let us have it; only, please, stop weeping, — I can't bear it!"

Volódya's condescension gave us very little pleasure; on the contrary, his lazy and weary look destroyed all the charm of the game. When we seated ourselves on the ground and, imagining that we were rowing out to catch fish, began to row with all our might, Volódya sat down with crossed arms and in a pose which had nothing in common with the attitude of a fisherman. I told him so; but he answered that we should gain nothing from swinging our arms more or less, and that we should not get far away anyhow. I involuntarily agreed with him. When I imagined that, holding a stick over my shoulder, I was going into the woods to hunt, Volódya lay flat on his back, with his hands behind his head, and told me that he was going there too. Such actions and words cooled our zest for the game, and were extremely unpleasant, the more so since, in reality, we could not help admitting that Volódya acted wisely.

I know myself that with a stick it is not possible to kill a bird, or even to shoot at all. That is only a game.

But if one were to judge that way, it would not even be possible to ride on chairs; and yet, Volódya himself remembers, I think, how in the long winter evenings we used to cover an armchair with a cloth, and make a carriage of it; one took the coachman's seat, another the lackey's, the girls were in the middle, three stools were the three horses, — and we started off on the road. And what different kinds of accidents used to happen on that road, and how merrily and swiftly those winter evenings passed away! To judge by what was going on now, there would be no game. And if there were to be no game, what, then, would be left?

IX.

SOMETHING LIKE FIRST LOVE

As Lyúbochka represented that she was plucking some American fruit from a tree, she pulled down, together with a leaf, an immense worm; she threw it away in terror, lifted up her hands, and jumped aside, as if afraid that something might burst from it. The game stopped, we all fell to the ground, touching our heads, to get a glimpse of that peculiar thing.

I was looking over Kátenka's shoulder, who was trying to lift the worm on a leaf which she placed in its way.

I had noticed that many girls were in the habit of shrugging their shoulders, whenever they tried to restore the low-necked dress to its proper place. I remember how Mimi used to get angry at that motion, saying: "*C'est un geste de femme de chambre.*" As Kátenka was bending over the worm, she made that very motion, and at the same time the wind raised her little braid from her white neck. Her shoulder was, during that motion of hers, about two feet from my lips. I was no longer looking at the worm, but right straight at her shoulder, which I gave a smacking kiss. She did not turn round, but I noticed that her neck and ears were blushing. Volódya did not raise his head, but said, contemptuously:

"What tenderness!"

There were tears in my eyes.

I did not take my eyes away from Kátenka. I had long been used to her fresh, fair face, and I always loved

it; but now I began to look more closely at it, and loved it even more. When we walked up to the grown people, papa announced to our great delight that, at mother's request, our departure was postponed till the next morning.

We rode back together with the carriage. Volódya and I, desirous to surpass each other in the art of horseback riding and in daring, made all kinds of evolutions near it. My shadow was now longer than before, and, judging by it, I supposed that I had the appearance of a fine-looking rider; but the feeling of self-satisfaction which I was experiencing was soon shattered by the following incident. Wishing to gain the final applause of all those who were seated in the carriage, I lagged a little behind, then, with the aid of whip and legs, put the horse to a gallop, assumed a carelessly graceful attitude, and attempted to pass in a whirl on the side of the carriage, where Kátenka was sitting. The only thing I did not know was whether to pass by in silence, or with a shout. But the miserable horse stopped so suddenly the moment it came in a line with the carriage horses, in spite of all my efforts to the contrary, that I flew over the saddle upon its neck, and came very near rolling off.

X.

THE KIND OF A MAN MY FATHER WAS

He was a man of the past age, and had the indefinable character, common to the youths of that time, a compound of chivalry, daring, self-confidence, amiability and merriment. He looked contemptuously at the people of the present generation, which view originated as much in his inborn haughtiness, as in the secrèt annoyance because in our age he could have neither that influence, nor those successes, which he had enjoyed in his. His two chief passions in life were cards and women; he had won several millions in the course of his life, and he had liaisons with an endless number of women of all classes of society.

A tall, stately stature, a strange, mincing gait, a habit of shrugging his shoulder, small, eternally smiling eyes, a large, aquiline nose, irregular lips that were folded rather awkwardly, but pleasantly, a defective enunciation, — he lisped, — and a head entirely bald: such was the exterior of my father ever since I can remember him, — an exterior with which he managed not only to pass for a man *à bonnes fortunes*, — and he really was such, — but even to be in favour with people of all conditions of life, especially with those whom he wished to please.

He knew how to get the best out of his relations with everybody. Although he had never been a man of very fashionable society, he always cultivated the acquaintance of people of that circle, and he did this in such a manner

as to be respected. He was possessed of that extreme measure of pride and self-confidence which, without offending others, raised him in the opinion of the world. He was original, though not always so, and he used this originality as a means of social advancement which in some cases took the place of worldliness and wealth. Nothing in the world could rouse in him a feeling of surprise: in whatever brilliant position he happened to be, he always seemed to have been born for it. He knew so well how to hide from others and remove from himself the dark side of life which is filled with petty annoyances and grief, that it was impossible not to envy him. He was a connoisseur in all things that furnish comfort and enjoyment, and he knew how to use them.

His hobby was his brilliant connections, which he possessed partly through my mother's family relations, partly through the companions of his youth. But at them he was angered in his heart, because they had far advanced in rank, while he for ever remained a Lieutenant of the Guard, out of service. Like all former military men, he did not know how to dress fashionably; but he dressed originally and with taste. He always wore ample light raiment, beautiful linen, large turned-back cuffs and collars. And everything was well adapted to his tall stature, strong frame, bald head, and quiet, self-confident motions.

He was sensitive and even given to weeping. Frequently, when in reading aloud he reached a pathetic passage, his voice would falter, and tears appear, and he would angrily put down the book. He loved music and sang, accompanying himself at the piano, the ditties of his friend A——, gipsy songs and some arias from operas; but he did not like "scientific" music and, disregarding the commonly accepted opinion, openly said that Beethoven's sonatas made him sleepy and tired, and that he knew nothing better than "Wake me not, while I am young," as Madam Seménov used to sing it, and "Not

alone," as the gipsy maiden Tanyúsha sang it. His nature was one of those which for a good deed need a public. God knows whether he had any moral convictions. His life was so full of distractions of all kinds that he had had no time to form them, and he was so fortunate in his life that he saw no need for them.

In his old age he formed settled opinions and invariable rules for everything, but they were all based exclusively on a practical basis. Those acts and that conduct of life which caused him happiness and pleasure he regarded as good, and he considered that all people ought at all times to act likewise. He spoke with great enthusiasm, and that ability, it seemed to me, increased the flexibility of his rules: he was not able to speak of the same deed as a very pleasant jest and as an act of low rascality.

XI.

OCCUPATIONS IN THE CABINET AND IN THE SITTING-ROOM

It was getting dark when we reached home. Mamma seated herself at the piano, and we children brought paper, pencils, and paint, and took up positions at the round table. I had only some blue paint; yet I began to picture the hunt with that alone. Having very vividly represented a blue boy astride on a blue horse, and blue dogs, I was not quite sure whether it was proper to paint a blue hare, and so I ran into papa's cabinet to take counsel with him. Papa was reading something, and to my question, "Are there any blue hares?" he answered, without raising his head, "There are, my dear, there are." I returned to the round table and painted a blue hare; but I found it necessary later to change the blue hare into a bush. The bush did not please me either; I made a tree of it, and of the tree I made a hay rick, and of the rick a cloud, and finally I so smeared the whole paper over with the blue paint, that I tore it up in anger, and dozed off in an armchair.

Mamma was playing the second concert of Field, her teacher. I was dozing, and in my imagination rose some light, bright and transparent recollections. She began to play a pathetic sonata of Beethoven, and something sad, heavy and gloomy overcast my mind. Mamma often played these two pieces. I very well remember, therefore, the feeling which they evoked in me. That feeling

resembled recollections, but recollections of what? It seemed to me that I was recalling something that had never been.

Opposite me was the door to the cabinet, and I saw Yákov and some other people in caftans and beards entering through it. The door was at once closed after them. "Well, now the occupation has begun!" thought I. It seemed to me there was nothing more important in the whole world than the affairs which were transacted in the cabinet. I was strengthened in this belief because people generally walked up to the door of the cabinet whispering and on tiptoe, while from it was heard papa's loud voice, and was borne the odour of a cigar which, for some reason, always attracted me. In my waking moments I was suddenly struck by a familiar creaking of boots in the officiating room. Karl Ivánovich walked up on tiptoe, but with a gloomy and firm face, holding some kind of notes in his hand, and lightly knocked at the door. He was admitted, and the door was again closed.

"I wonder whether some misfortune has happened," thought I. "Karl Ivánovich is angry, and he is capable of doing almost anything."

I again fell asleep.

There was, however, no misfortune. An hour later the same creaking boots awoke me. Karl Ivánovich, with his handkerchief wiping off the tears which I had noticed on his cheeks, issued from the door, and mumbling something to himself, went up-stairs. Papa came out after him, and entered the sitting-room.

"Do you know what I have just decided?" said he in a happy voice, placing his hand on mamma's shoulder.

"What, my dear?"

"I shall take Karl Ivánovich along with the children. They are used to him, and he, it seems, is really attached to them. Seven hundred roubles a year does not amount to much, *et puis au fond c'est un très bon diable.*"

I could not at all grasp why papa was scolding Karl Iványovich.

"I am very glad," said mamma, "both for the children and for him; he is an excellent old man."

"You ought to have seen how touched he was when I told him that he should leave the five hundred roubles as a present for the children! But what is most amusing is the bill which he brought me. It is worth looking at," added he, with a smile, as he gave her the note which had been written by Karl Iványovich's hand. "It is fine!"

Here are the contents of the note.

"For the children two fishing-rod — 70 kopek.

"Coloured paper, gold border, glew and form for boxs, as presents — 6 roubles 55 kopek.

"A book and bow, presents to children — 8 roubles 16 kopek.

"Pantaloon to Nikoláy — 4 rouble.

"Promised by Peter Aleksántrofich from Moscow in the year 18— gold watch at 140 roubles.

"Sum total due to Karl Mauer outside of salary — 159 roubles 79 kopek."

Reading this note, in which Karl Iványovich demanded payment for all his expenditures for presents, and even for a present which he had been promised, everybody will conclude that Karl Iványovich was nothing more than an unfeeling and avaricious egoist, but that is a mistake.

When he entered the cabinet with the notes in his hand and with a ready speech in his head, he had intended to expatiate to papa on all the injustice which he had suffered in our house, but when he began to speak in the same touching voice and the same touching intonations in which he generally dictated to us, his eloquence acted most powerfully upon himself, so that when he reached the place where he said, "However sad it will be for me to part from the children," he completely lost himself, his

voice began to tremble, and he was compelled to get his checkered handkerchief out of his pocket.

"Yes, Peter Aleksándrych," said he through tears (that passage was not at all in his prepared speech), "I am so accustomed to the children that I do not know what I am going to do without them. I should prefer to serve you without pay," he added, with one hand wiping his tears, and with the other handing in his bill.

I am absolutely sure that Karl Ivánovich was that moment speaking sincerely, because I know his good heart; but it remains a mystery to me how his bill harmonized with his words.

"If the parting is sad for you, it is still sadder for me," said papa, tapping his shoulder. "I have now changed my mind."

Shortly before supper, Grísha entered the room. He had not ceased sobbing and weeping from the time he had come to our home, which, in the opinion of those who believed in his ability to predict, foreboded some misfortune for our house. He began to take leave, and said that the next morning he would wander on. I beckoned to Volódya, and went out-of-doors.

"What?"

"If you want to see Grísha's chains, let us go up-stairs, to the apartments of the male servants. Grísha sleeps there in the second room, and we can see everything from the lumber-room, and we shall see everything —"

"Superb! Wait here awhile; I will call the girls."

The girls came out, and we proceeded up-stairs. After some dispute as to who should be the first to go into the dark lumber-room, we seated ourselves, and began to wait.

XII.

GRÍSHA

We felt ill at ease in the darkness. We pressed close to each other, and did not say a word. Almost right after us Grísha entered with slow steps. In one hand he held his staff, in the other a tallow dip in a brass candlestick. We did not dare to breathe.

"Lord Jesus Christ! Holy Mother of God! To the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost," repeated he, breathing heavily, with all kinds of intonations and abbreviations which are peculiar only to those who often repeat these words.

Having, with a prayer, placed his staff in the corner, and surveying his bed, he began to undress. Ungirding his old black belt, he slowly took off his torn nankeen frock, carefully folded it, and hung it over the back of the chair. His face did not now express, as usually, dulness and haste; on the contrary, he was quiet, pensive, and even majestic. His motions were slow and thoughtful.

When he was left in the linen, he softly let himself down on his bed, made the sign of the cross over it on all sides, and, as could easily be seen, with an effort (he was frowning) rearranged the chains under his shirt. Having remained for a minute in a sitting posture, and carefully examining the linen which had been torn in places, he arose, with a prayer raised the candle on a level with the holy shrine, in which were a few images, made the sign of the cross toward them, and turned the

candle upside down. It went out with a crackling sound.

The almost full moon burst through the windows that looked out upon the forest. The long, white figure of the fool was, on the one side, illuminated by the pale, silvery beams of the moon, and, on the other, it fell as a black shadow, together with the shadows from the frames, upon the floor and the walls, and reached up to the ceiling. In the yard the watchman was beating his brass plate.

Crossing his enormous hands on his breast, dropping his head, and continually drawing deep breaths, Grísha stood silently before the images, then with difficulty let himself down on his knees and began to pray.

At first he softly said familiar prayers, accentuating certain words, then he repeated them, but louder and with more animation. He began to use his own words, with perceptible effort trying to express himself in Church-Slavic. His words were incorrect, but touching. He prayed for all his benefactors (thus he called all who received him), among them for my mother, and for us; he prayed for himself, and asked the Lord to forgive him his heavy sins, and repeated, "O Lord, forgive mine enemies!" He arose with groans, still repeating the same words, prostrated himself upon the ground, and again arose, in spite of the weight of the chains that emitted a grating, penetrating sound as they struck the ground.

Volódya pinched my leg very painfully, but I did not even turn round. I only rubbed the place with my hand and continued, with a feeling of childish wonder, pity, and awe, to follow all the movements and words of Grísha.

Instead of merriment and laughter, which I had expected upon entering the lumber-room, I now experienced a chill and anguish of soul.

Grísha was for a long time in that attitude of religious

ecstasy, and he improvised prayers. Now he repeated several times in succession, "The Lord have mercy upon me," but every time with new strength and expression; now, again, he said, "Forgive me, O Lord, instruct me what to do, instruct me what to do, O Lord!" with an expression, as if he expected an immediate answer to his prayer; now, again, were heard only pitiful sobs. He rose on his knees, crossed his arms on his breast, and grew silent.

I softly put my head out of the door, and did not breathe. Grísha did not move; deep sighs escaped from his breast; in the dim pupil of his blind eye, which was illuminated by the moon, stopped a tear.

"Thy will be done!" he suddenly exclaimed with an inimitable expression, knocked his brow against the floor, and began to sob like an infant.

Much water has flowed since then, many memories of the past have lost all meaning for me and have become dim recollections, and pilgrim Grísha has long ago ended his last pilgrimage; but the impression which he produced on me, and the feeling which he evoked, will never die in my memory.

O great Christian Grísha! Your faith was so strong that you felt the nearness of God; your love was so great that words flowed of their own will from your lips, and you did not verify them by reason. And what high praise you gave to His majesty, when, not finding any words, you prostrated yourself on the ground!

The feeling of contrition with which I listened to Grísha could not last long; in the first place, because my curiosity was satisfied, and, in the second, because my feet had fallen asleep from sitting so long in one posture, and I wanted to join in the general whispering and consultation which was taking place behind me in the dark lumber-room. Somebody touched my hand, and said in a whisper, "Whose hand is it?" It was very dark in

the lumber-room, but, by the mere touch and by the voice that was whispering right over my ear, I immediately recognized Kátenka.

Quite unconsciously I seized her short-gloved arm at the elbow, and pressed my lips against it. Kátenka, it seems, was surprised at this action, and drew her hand back; in doing so, she knocked down a broken chair which was standing in the lumber-room. Grísha raised his head, quietly looked around and, saying his prayer, began to make the sign of the cross in all the corners. We ran out of the lumber-room noisily.

XIII.

NATÁLYA SÁVISHNA

In the middle of the last century there used to run about the yards of the village Khabárovka, in a dress of ticking, the barefoot, but merry, fat, and red-cheeked girl, Natáshka. On account of the deserts, and at the request of her father, the clarinet-player Sávva, my grandfather took her "up-stairs," to be among the female servants of grandmother. Chambermaid Natáshka distinguished herself in that capacity, both by her meekness of manner and by her zeal. When mother was born, and a nurse was needed, this duty fell on Natáshka. In that new field she earned praises and rewards for her activity, faithfulness, and attachment to the young miss. But the powdered head and the buckled stockings of young, dapper, officious Fóka, who had frequent relations with her during his duties, charmed her coarse, but loving heart. She had even made up her own mind to go to grandfather to ask his permission to marry Fóka. Grandfather received her wish as a sign of her ingratitude, grew angry, and sent poor Natálya, as a punishment, into the cattle-yard in a village of the steppes. Six months later, however, since there was no one who could take her place, she was brought back to the estate, and restored to her old position. As she returned from banishment in her ticking garments, she appeared before grandfather, fell down before his feet, and asked him to restore her to his former favour and kindness, and to for-

get her old infatuation which, she swore, would never again return. And, indeed, she kept her word.

Since then Natáshka became Natálya Savishna, and donned a cap; all the abundance of love which she treasured she transferred to her young lady.

When a governess took her place with mamma, and the keys of the larder, and all the [illegible] and the provisions were placed in her hands. She executed her new duties with the same zeal and love. She lived only for the good of her masters, and seeing in everything loss, ruin, and misappropriation, tried in all ways to counteract them.

When mamma married, she wished to show her appreciation of Natálya Sávishna's twenty years' labour and faithfulness; so she sent for her, and expressing in the most flattering words all her gratefulness and love for her, handed her a sheet of paper with a revenue stamp upon it, on which was written Natálya Sávishna's emancipation, adding that, no matter whether she continued to serve in our house or not, she would receive a yearly pension of three hundred roubles. Natálya listened to all that in silence, then, taking the document in her hands, angrily looked upon it, mumbled something between her teeth, and ran out of the room, slamming the door behind her. Mamma did not understand the cause of her strange act, so, waiting a few minutes, she went into Natálya Sávishna's room. She was sitting with tearful eyes upon her coffer, fingering her handkerchief, and was looking fixedly at the bits of the torn emancipation document that were lying near her feet.

"What is the matter with you, my dear Natálya?" asked mamma, as she took her hand.

"Nothing, motherkin," answered she. "Evidently I have in some way displeased you, that you are chasing me from the estate. Well, I shall go."

She tore her hand away and, scarcely restraining her

tears, wanted to rush out of the room. Mamma kept her back, embraced her, and they both melted into tears.

As far back as I can remember myself, I remember Natálya Sávishna, her love and her favours; but it is only now that I am able to estimate them, — for then it never occurred to me what a rare and remarkable being that old woman was. She not only never spoke, but, it seems, she never even thought of herself; all her life consisted of love and self-sacrifice. I was so accustomed to her unselfish, tender love for us that I did not imagine it could have been otherwise, in no way was grateful to her, and never asked myself whether she was happy or satisfied.

At times I would run into her chamber, under the pretext of some absolute necessity, and would sit down and begin to think aloud, not being in the least troubled by her presence. She was always busy with something: she either knitted some stockings or rummaged through the coffers with which her chamber was crowded, or took a list of the linen, and, listening to all the nonsense which I was talking, how, "when I shall be a general, I will marry a famous beauty, will buy me a red horse, will build me a glass house, and will send for Karl Ivánovich's relatives in Saxony," and so forth, she would say, "Yes, my dear, yes." Generally, when I got up to go, she opened a blue coffer, on the lid of which were pasted, on the inside, — I remember it as if it happened to-day, — a coloured reproduction of a hussar, a picture with a pomatum can, and a drawing by Volódya, — took out of that box some incense, lighted it, and, fanning, said:

"This, my dear one, is incense from Ochákov. When your deceased grandfather — the kingdom of heaven be his! — went against the Turks, he brought it back from there. There is only this last piece left," she added with a sigh.

In the coffers that filled the room there was absolutely everything. No matter what was needed, they used to

say, "We ought to ask Natálya Sávishna," and, indeed, after rummaging awhile, she would find the necessary article and declare, "Luckily I have put it away." In these coffers there were thousands of such articles of which nobody in the house knew anything, and for which no one cared, except she.

Once I was angry with her. It happened like this. At dinner, as I was pouring out a glass of kvas, I dropped the bottle and spoiled the table-cloth.

"Call Natálya Sávishna to see what her darling child has done," said mamma.

Natálya Sávishna entered, and, seeing the puddle which I had made, shook her head; then mamma said something in her ear, and she went out threatening me with her finger.

After dinner I went into the parlour, leaping about in the happiest frame of mind, when suddenly Natálya Sávishna jumped from behind the door, with the table-cloth in her hands, caught me, and began to wipe my face with the wet part of it, all the time saying: "Don't soil table-cloths, don't soil table-cloths!" That so incensed me, that I bawled from anger.

"What!" said I to myself, as I walked about the parlour and choked with tears, "Natálya Sávishna, simple Natálya, says 'thou' to me, and strikes my face with a wet table-cloth, as if I were a common village boy. No, that is terrible!"

When Natálya Sávishna saw that I was blubbering, she ran away, but I continued to strut about and to consider how to repay insolent Natálya for the insult which she had offered me.

A few minutes later Natálya Sávishna returned, timidly accosted me, and began to console me.

"Do stop, my dear one, stop weeping — forgive me, foolish woman — I have done wrong — you will forgive me, my darling — here is something for you."

She took from her handkerchief a cornet, in which were two pieces of caramels and one fig, and with a trembling hand gave them to me. I did not have enough strength to look into the face of the good old woman; I turned away, as I accepted the present, and my tears began to flow more copiously. this time not from anger, but from love and shame

XIV

THE SEPARATION

ON the day following the incidents described by me, at the twelfth hour, a carriage and a calash stood at the entrance. Nikoláy was dressed in travelling fashion; that is, his trousers were tucked into his boots and his coat was tightly girded by a belt. He was standing in the calash and arranging the ulsters and pillows on the seats; if they seemed too much puffed, he seated himself on the pillows, and, leaping up and down, pressed them into shape.

"For the Lord's sake, do us the favour, Nikoláy Dmítrich, to see whether you can't put in the master's strong box," said papa's valet, breathlessly, as he stuck his head out of the carriage; "it is a small affair."

"You ought to have said so before, Mikhéy Iványch," answered Nikoláy hastily and in anger, throwing with all his might a bundle into the bottom of the calash. "Upon my word, my head is in a whirl as it is, and there you are bothering me with your strong boxes," he added, raising his cap, and wiping off large drops of perspiration from his sun-browned face.

The manorial peasants, in coats, caftans, and shirts, and without hats, the women in ticking skirts and striped kerchiefs, with babes in their arms, and the boys barefoot, stood around the veranda, examined the vehicles, and conversed with each other. One of the drivers, a stooping old man in a winter cap and a camel-hair coat, held

in his hand the shaft of the carriage, moved it to and fro, and thoughtfully looked at the wheels; another, a fine-looking young lad, clad only in a white shirt with red Bukhara cotton gussets, and wearing a black lambskin cap shaped like a cylindrical buckwheat cake, which he, scratching his blond locks, poised now on one ear, now on the other, put his camel-hair coat on the coachman's box, threw the reins there also and, snapping his plaited whip, looked now at his boots, now at the coachmen who were greasing the calash. One of them, straining himself, was holding a jack; another, bending over the wheel, was carefully greasing the axle and the axle-box, and, not to lose the last bit of grease left on the brush, smeared it on the lower part of the rim.

Variously coloured, weak-kneed post-horses stood at the picket fence and switched the flies off with their tails. Some of them, spreading their shaggy, swollen legs, blinked their eyes and were dozing; others rubbed each other, from ennui, or nibbled at leaves or stalks of rough, dark-green ferns that grew near the veranda. A few greyhounds either breathed heavily, lying in the sun, or walked about in the shade under the carriage and calash, and licked the grease which oozed out of the axles. There was a dusty mist in the air, and the horizon was of grayish olive hue; but there was not a cloud to be seen in the whole sky. A strong westerly wind raised columns of dust from the roads and fields, bent the tops of the tall linden-trees and birches of the garden, and carried far away the falling yellow leaves. I was sitting near the window, and impatiently was waiting for the end of all the preparations.

When all had gathered in the sitting-room near the round table, in order to pass a few minutes together, for the last time, it did not occur to me what a sad moment awaited us. The most trifling thoughts were crossing my brain. I asked myself: which coachman will ride in the

calash, and which one in the carriage? Who will travel with papa, and who with Karl Iványovich? and why do they insist in wrapping me in a shawl and a wadded jacket?

"I am not as tender as that. Don't be afraid, I shall not freeze. If only there will soon be an end to it all! If we just could get seated, and be off!"

"To whom will you order me to give a note about the children's linen?" said Natálya Sávishna, who had entered with tearful eyes and carrying a note in her hand, as she turned to mamma.

"Give it to Nikoláy, and then come to tell the children good-bye!"

The old woman wanted to say something, but suddenly stopped, covered her face with her handkerchief, and, motioning with her hand, left the room. My heart was pinched when I saw her motion; but my impatience to travel was greater than my sympathy, and I continued to listen with complete indifference to the conversation between father and mother. They were evidently speaking about things that interested neither the one nor the other: what it was necessary to buy for the house; what to say to Princess Sophie and Madame Julie; and whether the road would be good.

Fóka entered, and in the same voice in which he announced "Dinner is served," he said, as he stopped on the threshold, "The horses are ready." I noticed how mamma shuddered and grew pale at this bit of news, as if it had been something unforeseen by her.

Fóka was ordered to close all the doors in the house. That amused me very much, "as if everybody were hiding from somebody."

When all seated themselves, — Fóka, too, sat down on the edge of a chair, — but the moment he did that, the door creaked, and everybody looked round. Natálya rapidly entered the room, and, without raising her eyes,

seated herself at the door on the same chair with Fóka. I see clearly the bald, wrinkled face of Fóka and the bent, kindly figure in the cap, underneath which gray hair peeped out. They are both pressing together on one chair, and they both feel uncomfortable.

I continued to be careless and impatient. The ten seconds during which we sat with closed doors appeared to me a whole hour. Finally all arose, made the sign of the cross, and began to take leave. Papa embraced mamma, and kissed her several times.

"That will do, my dear!" said papa; "we are not departing for an age."

"It is sad, nevertheless!" said mamma, in a voice trembling with tears.

When I heard that voice and saw her quivering lips and eyes full of tears, I forgot everything, and I felt so sad, so pained, and so utterly wretched, that I wanted rather to run away than to bid her farewell. I understood at that moment that when she embraced father, she really was bidding us farewell.

She began so many times to kiss Volódya and to make the sign of the cross over him that, supposing she was going to turn to me, I pushed myself forward, but she again and again blessed him and pressed him to her breast. At last, I embraced her and, clinging to her, wept and wept, thinking of nothing but my sorrow.

When we went out to seat ourselves in the vehicles, the annoying manorial servants followed to bid us good-bye. Their "Please, your hand, sir," their smacking kisses on the shoulder, and the odour of lard from their heads provoked in me a feeling very much akin to disgust. Under the influence of that feeling I very coldly kissed Natálya Sávishna's cap, while she, all in tears, bade me farewell.

It is strange, but I see all the faces of the servants as if it had happened to-day, and I could paint them with

their minutest details, but mamma's face and location have absolutely escaped from my imagination, — perhaps, because at that time I could not gather courage to take one good look at her. It then seemed to me that if I were to do so, my grief and hers would reach impossible limits.

I rushed before the others to the carriage and seated myself in the back seat. As the top was raised, I could not see anything, but a certain instinct told me that mamma was still there.

"Shall I take one more glance at her, or not? Well, for the last time!" said I to myself, and put my head out of the carriage toward the veranda. Just at that time, mamma, with the same thought, had come up from the opposite side to the carriage, and was calling me by name. When I heard her voice behind me, I turned toward her, but did it so rapidly that we knocked our heads together: she smiled sadly, and for the last time gave me a tight embrace and a kiss.

When we had moved away a few fathoms, I decided to look at her. The wind had raised the blue kerchief with which her head was tied; dropping her head and covering her face with her hands, she slowly walked up the veranda. Fóka was sustaining her.

Papa was seated by my side, but he did not say anything. I choked with tears, and something so compressed my throat that I was afraid I would strangle. When we drove out on the highway, we saw a white handkerchief which some one on the balcony was waving. I began to wave mine, and this motion calmed me a little. I continued to sob, and the thought that my tears were a proof of my sensitiveness gave me pleasure and joy.

When we had travelled about a verst, I sat down more calmly, and I began to look with stubborn attention at the nearest object before my eyes, — the hind part of the side horse that ran on my side. I watched that dappled

horse flapping his tail, and striking one leg against another, which made the driver crack his plaited whip at him, and then his legs began to move more evenly. I saw the harness leaping about, and the rings upon it, and I kept on looking at the harness until it became lathered at the tail. I began to look around me: at the waving fields of ripe rye; at the dark fallow field on which here and there a plow, a peasant, and a mare with her colt could be seen; at the verst posts, and even at the coachman's box, in order to see who the driver was. My face was not yet dry from its tears, when my thoughts were far away from my mother, whom I had left, perhaps, for ever. But every reminiscence led my thoughts to her. I recalled the mushroom which I had found the day before in the avenue of birches; I recalled how Lyúbochka and Kátenka disputed who was to pluck it, and I recalled how they wept when they bade us farewell.

"I am sorry to leave them, and I am sorry for Natálya Sávishna, and for the birch avenue, and for Fóka! I am sorry to leave even growling Mimi. I am sorry for everything, for everything! And poor mamma!" And tears again stood in my eyes, but not for long.

XV.

CHILDHOOD

HAPPY, happy, irretrievable period of childhood! How can one help loving and cherishing its memories? These memories refresh and elevate my soul and serve me as a source of my best enjoyments.

I remember how, having frisked about until tired, I sat at the tea table in my high chair. It was late. I had long ago drunk my cup of milk and sugar; sleep closed my eyes, but I did not budge from the place, and remained there and listened. How could I help listening? Mamma was speaking to somebody, and the sounds of her voice were so sweet and so charming. Those sounds alone spoke so eloquently to my heart! With eyes dimmed by sleepiness I looked fixedly at her face, and suddenly she grew so small, so very small, — her face was not larger than a button, but I saw it just as plainly. I saw her looking at me and smiling. I liked to see her so tiny. I blinked my eyes even more, and she became not larger than those little men one sees in the pupil of the eye. I moved, and the whole charm was broken. I squinted, turned around, and in every manner possible tried to renew it, — it was all in vain.

I rose, scampered away, and comfortably lodged myself in an armchair.

"You will fall asleep again, Nikólenka!" said mamma: "you had better go up-stairs."

"I do not want to sleep, mamma," I answered her, and

indistinct, though sweet, dreams filled my imagination. A healthy childish sleep closed my eyelids, and a few minutes later I lost consciousness and slept until I was awakened. In my waking moments I felt somebody's hand touching me: by the touch alone I could tell her, even in my sleep, and I involuntarily caught that hand and pressed it hard, very hard to my lips.

Everybody had left; one candle was burning in the sitting-room; mamma had said that she would wake me herself. It was she who seated herself on the chair upon which I was asleep, and with her lovely, tender hand patted my hair. Over my ear was heard the familiar voice:

"Get up, my darling, it is time to go to bed."

No indifferent looks embarrassed her: she was not afraid to pour out all her tenderness and love on me. I did not stir, but kissed her hand even harder.

"Do get up, my angel!"

She touched my neck with her other hand, and her soft fingers moved about and tickled me. It was quiet and half-dark in the room; my nerves were aroused by the tickling and by the waking. Mamma was sitting close to me; she touched me; I scented her odour, and heard her voice. All that caused me to leap up, to embrace her neck with both my hands, to press my head to her breast, and, breathing heavily, to say:

"Oh, my dear, dear mother, how I love you!"

She smiled a sad, bewitching smile, took my head into both her hands, kissed my brow, and placed me upon her knees.

"So you love me very much?" She was silent for a moment, then she said: "Remember, you must always love me; you must never forget me! You will not forget your mamma when she is no more? You will not, Nikólenka?"

She kissed me more tenderly yet.

"Stop, don't say that, my darling, my sweetheart!" I called out, kissing her knees, and tears ran in streams from my eyes, — tears of love and ecstasy.

When, after such a scene, I came up-stairs and stood in my wadded cloak before the holy images, what a wonderful feeling I experienced at the words, "Preserve, O Lord, father and mother!" When, in such moments, I repeated the prayers which my childish lips for the first time lisped after my beloved mother, my love for her and my love for God were strangely mingled in one feeling.

After the prayer I rolled myself into my coverlet, and my heart felt light and cheerful. One dream chased another, — but what were they about? They were intangible, but filled with pure love and hope for bright happiness. I thought of Karl Ivánovich and his bitter fate, — of the only man whom I knew to be unhappy, and I felt so sorry for him, and so loved him, that the tears gushed from my eyes, and I thought: God grant him happiness, and me an opportunity of helping him, and alleviating his sorrow; I was ready to sacrifice everything for him. Then I stuck my favourite china toy, — a hare or a dog, — into the corner of the down pillow, and I was happy seeing how comfortable and snug the toy was there. I also prayed the Lord that He would give happiness to everybody, and that all should be satisfied, and that to-morrow should be good weather for the outing, and then I turned on my other side, my thoughts and dreams became mixed and disturbed, and I fell softly, quietly asleep, my face wet with tears.

Will that freshness, carelessness, need of love, and strength of faith, which one possesses in childhood, ever return? What time can be better than that when all the best virtues, — innocent merriment and limitless need of love, — are the only incitements in life?

Where are all those ardent prayers, where is the best gift — those tears of contrition? The consoling angel

came on his pinions, with a smile wiped off those tears, and fanned sweet dreams to the uncorrupted imagination of the child.

Is it possible life has left such heavy traces in my heart that these tears and that ecstasy have for ever gone from me? Is it possible, nothing but memories are left?

XVI.

POETRY

ALMOST a month after we had settled in Moscow, I was sitting at a large table up-stairs, in grandmother's house, and writing. Our teacher of drawing sat opposite me, and gave a final touch to the head of a turbaned Turk, drawn with a black crayon. Volódya, standing behind the teacher, craned his neck and looked over his shoulder. This head was Volódya's first production in black crayon, and it was that very day to be presented to grandmother, it being her name day.

"And won't you throw some shadows here?" said Volódya to the teacher, rising on tiptoes, and pointing to the Turk's neck.

"No, it is not necessary," said the teacher, putting away the crayons and the drawing-pen in a box with a sliding lid. "It is all right this way, and don't touch it again. Well, and you, Nikólenka," he added, rising, and still looking sidewise at the Turk, "tell us, at last, your secret; what are you going to offer to grandmother? Really, it would be well if you, too, gave her a head. Good-bye, young gentlemen!" He took his hat and a ticket, and went out.

That moment I thought myself that a head would be better than what I was working on. When we were told that grandmother's name day would come soon, and that we ought to prepare some presents for that day, it occurred to me to write verses for the occasion, and I immediately picked

out two lines with a rhyme, and hoped shortly to find the rest. I absolutely cannot remember how such a strange idea, for a child, could have got into my head, but I recall that it gave me pleasure, and that to all questions about the matter, I answered that I should not fail to offer grandmother a present, but that I should not tell anybody what it was.

Contrary to my expectation, it soon appeared that, in spite of all my efforts, I was not able to find any other verses except the two lines which I had made up on the spur of the moment. I began to read the poems that were in our readers, but neither Dmítriev, nor Derzhávin helped me at all! On the contrary, they only convinced me of my incapacity. As I knew that Karl Ivánovich was fond of copying poems, I began quietly to rummage through his papers, and among his German poems found one Russian lyric, which, no doubt, belonged to his own pen.

To Madam L. . . Petrovski, 1828, 3 juni.
Remember me near,
Remember me far,
Remember my
Even from now up to ever,
Remember me to my grave,
How faithful I can love.
— *Karl Mauer.*

This poem, written in a beautiful, round hand, on thin letter-paper, took my fancy on account of the stirring feeling which pervaded it. I immediately learned it by rote, and decided to take it for my model. Things now went much easier. On the name day my greeting, consisting of twelve lines, was ready, and, seating myself at the table in the class-room, I copied it on vellum paper.

Two sheets of paper were already spoiled, — not that I wished to change something, the verses seemed perfect to

me, but beginning with the third line, the ends of the verses began to turn upwards more and more, so that one could see, even from a distance, that they were written crooked, and that they were not good for anything.

The third sheet was just as crooked as the other two, but I decided not to copy it again. In my poem I congratulated grandmother, and wished her to live long, and finished as follows:

> We will try never to bother,
> And will love you like our own mother.

It did not look so bad, after all, only the last verse strangely offended my ear.

"And will love you like our own mother," mumbled I. "What other rhyme could I get for mother? other? smother? Oh, well, it will pass anyway; it is not worse than the verses of Karl Ivánovich."

I wrote down the last verse. Then I read aloud my production, with feeling and expression, in the sleeping-room. There were lines without any measure, and that did not disconcert me; but the last verse struck me more unpleasantly still. I sat down on my bed, and fell to musing.

"Why did I write *like our own mother?* She was not here, so I ought not even to have mentioned her. It is true, I love grandmother, and I respect her, but still, it is not the same — why did I write that, why did I lie? To be sure this was a poem, still I ought not to have done so."

Just then the tailor entered, and brought the new half-frock coats.

"Well, it will have to remain that way!" said I, in great impatience, as I angrily shoved the poem under the pillow, and ran away to try on the Moscow clothes.

The Moscow clothes turned out to be a fine affair: the

cinnamon-coloured half-frocks, with their brass buttons, were closely fitting, — not as they used to make them in the country for us, by sizes; the black trousers, tightly fitting, too, wonderfully showed the muscles, and hung over the boots.

"At last I myself have pantaloons with foot straps, and real ones!" I thought and, beside myself with pleasure, examined my legs on all sides. Although the trousers were dreadfully tight, and I felt uncomfortable in my new suit, I did not mention it to anybody, but, on the contrary, said that I felt quite at ease, and, if there was any fault in the suit, it was, that it was too loose. After that I stood for a long time before the looking-glass, combing my copiously waxed hair. No matter how much I tried, I could not smooth down the tufts on my crown: the moment I wanted to experiment on their docility, and stopped pressing them down with the brush, they rose and towered in all directions, giving my face an exceedingly funny expression.

Karl Iványovich was dressing in the next room, and they carried through the class-room a blue dress coat to him, and with it some white appurtenances. At the door that led down-stairs was heard the voice of one of grandmother's chambermaids: I went out to discover what she wanted. She was holding in her hand a stiffly ironed shirt-front, and told me that she had brought it for Karl Iványovich, and that she had not slept that night, in order to get it washed in time. I undertook to hand him the shirt-front, and asked whether grandmother had risen.

"Indeed, sir! She has already had her coffee, and the protopope has come. How fine you look!" she added, smiling, and surveying my new garments.

This remark made me blush. I turned around on one foot, clicked my fingers, and leaped up, to let her feel that she did not know yet what a fine fellow I really was.

When I brought the shirt-front to Karl Iványovich, he did not need it any longer: he had put on another, and, bending over a small looking-glass, which stood on a table, was holding the superb tie of his cravat in his hands, and trying whether his smoothly shaven chin would freely go into it and come out again. Having pulled our garments into shape, and having asked Nikoláy to do the same for him, he took us to grandmother. I have to laugh when I think how strongly all three of us smelled of pomatum, as we descended the staircase.

Karl Iványovich had in his hands a small box of his own make; Volódya had the drawing, and I the poem. We all had on our tongue a greeting with which we were to offer our presents. Just as Karl Iványovich opened the door of the parlour, the clergyman was putting on his vestments, and the first sounds of the mass were heard.

Grandmother was in the parlour already: bending and leaning over the arm of a chair, she was standing at the wall and praying fervently. Papa stood near her. She turned around to us and smiled, when she noticed that we were hiding behind our backs the presents which we were to offer, and that we had stopped at the door, in our desire not to observed. All the effect of surprise, on which we had been counting, was lost.

When the blessing with the cross began, I suddenly felt that I was under the oppressive influence of an inconquerable, stupefying timidity, and, feeling that I should never have enough courage to make my offering to her, I hid behind Karl Iványovich's back. He congratulated grandmother in the choicest of expressions, and, transferring the box from his right hand to his left, handed it to her, and walked off a few steps, in order to give Volódya a chance. Grandmother, so it seemed, was delighted with the box, which was bordered with gold paper, and expressed her thanks to him with a most gracious smile. It was, however, evident that she did not know where to

place the box, and, probably for that reason, asked papa to see with what remarkable skill it was made.

Having satisfied his curiosity, papa handed it to the protopope who, it seemed, took a liking to the thing: he shook his head, and now looked at the box, and now at the master who had managed to produce such a beautiful object. Volódya offered his Turk, and he also was the recipient of the most flattering praise on all sides. Then came my turn: grandmother turned to me with a smile of encouragement.

Those who have experienced bashfulness, know that the feeling increases in direct proportion with time, and that decision diminishes in the same proportion; that is, the longer that condition lasts, the harder it is to overcome the bashfulness, and the less there is left of decision.

My last courage and decision left me when Karl Ivánovich and Volódya made their offerings, and my bashfulness reached its extreme limits: I felt my heart-blood continually coursing to my head, my face alternately changing colour, and large drops of perspiration oozing on my forehead and nose. My ears were burning; I felt a chill and a perspiration over my whole body; I stood now on one foot, now on another, and I did not budge from the spot.

"Well, do show us, Nikólenka! What is it you have, a box or a drawing?" said papa to me. There was nothing to be done; with a trembling hand I gave her the crushed, fatal roll; but my voice refused to serve me, and I stopped silent before grandmother. I was beside myself, thinking that, instead of the expected drawing, they would read aloud my worthless poem and the words *like my own mother* which would be a clear proof that I had never loved her, and that I had forgotten her. How am I to tell the agony through which I passed, when grandmother began to read aloud my poem; when, unable to make it out, she stopped in the middle of the verse, in

order to look at papa with a smile, which then seemed to me to be one of mockery; when she pronounced it differently from what I had intended it; and when, her eyes being weak, she did not finish reading it, but handed it to papa and asked him to read it from the beginning? It seemed to me that she did so because she was tired of reading such horrible and badly scrawled verses, and because she wanted papa to read the last line, which was such an evident proof of my heartlessness. I was waiting for him to snap my nose with the poem, and to say: "Naughty boy! Do not forget your mother! Take this for it!" But nothing of the kind happened; on the contrary, after it had been read, grandmother said: "*Charmant!*" and kissed my brow.

The box, the drawing, and the poem were put, by the side of two batiste handkerchiefs and a snuff-box with mamma's portrait, on a sort of extension table connected with the armchair in which grandmother always sat.

"Princess Várvara Ilínichna," announced one of the two huge lackeys who stood in the back of grandmother's carriage.

Grandmother was deep in thought over the portrait, which was fastened to the shell snuff-box, and did not answer.

"Does your Grace command to ask her in?" repeated the lackey.

XVII.

PRINCESS KORNÁKOV

"ASK her in," said grandmother, seating herself deeper in the chair.

The princess was a woman about forty-five years of age, small of stature, sickly, lean, and bilious, with grayish green, disagreeable little eyes, the expression of which clearly contradicted the unnaturally sweet curves of her mouth. Underneath a velvet hat with an ostrich feather could be seen her bright red hair; her eyebrows and eyelashes appeared even brighter and redder on the sickly colour of her face. In spite of all this, she gave a general impression of generosity and energy, thanks to her unaffected movements, her tiny hands, and the peculiar leanness of all her features.

The princess talked a great deal, and by reason of her talkativeness belonged to that class of people who are always speaking as though some one were contradicting them, although not a word is said. She now raised her voice, now gradually lowered it in order to burst forth with new vivacity, and glanced at her silent listeners, as if trying to strengthen herself by that glance.

Though the princess had kissed grandmother's hand, and continually called her *ma bonne tante*, I noticed that grandmother was not satisfied with her; she raised her brows in a peculiar manner, as she listened to the reason why Prince Mikháylo was absolutely unable to come to congratulate grandmother, though he wished very much

to do so, and, answering in Russian to the French speech of the princess, she said, dwelling with emphasis on her words:

"I thank you very much, my dear, for your attention, but as to Prince Mikháylo not being able to come, what is the use mentioning it? He has always a great deal to do. And what pleasure could it be for him to sit down with an old woman?"

And, not giving the princess a chance to contradict her words, she continued:

"Tell me, how are your children, my dear?"

"The Lord be praised, *ma tante*, they are growing, studying, and having a good time — especially Etienne, the eldest, is getting to be so mischievous that there is no getting on with him; but he is bright, *un garçon qui promet*. Just imagine, *mon cousin*," she continued, turning exclusively to papa, because grandmother, who was not in the least interested in the children of the princess, but wanted to praise her own grandchildren, carefully took my poem from under the box, and began to unfold the paper: "Just imagine, *mon cousin*, what he did a few days ago — "

The princess leaned over to papa, and began to tell him something with great animation. Having finished her story, which I did not hear, she burst out laughing and, looking interrogatively at papa, said:

"What do you think of that boy, *mon cousin?* He deserved a whipping; but that trick of his was so bright and amusing, that I forgave him, *mon cousin*."

And the princess fixed her eyes upon grandmother, and continued to smile, without saying anything.

"Do you *beat* your children, my dear?" asked grandmother, significantly raising her eyebrows, and emphasizing the word *beat*.

"Oh, *ma bonne tante*," answered the princess in a kind voice, casting a rapid glance upon papa, "I know your

opinion in regard to this matter, but permit me to disagree with you in this only: however much I have thought, or read, or consulted about the question, my experience has brought me to the conviction that it is necessary to act upon children through fear. To make anything of a child, you need fear — am I not right, *mon cousin?* And what is it, *je vous demande un peu,* children fear more than the rod?"

Saying this, she looked interrogatively at us, and, I must confess, I felt very ill at ease during that moment.

"Say what you may, a boy up to twelve and even fourteen years of age is a child. With girls it is a different matter."

"Yes, that is very nice, my dear," said grandmother, folding my poem and replacing it under the box, as if she did not regard the princess, after these words, worthy of hearing such a production. "That is very nice, only, please, tell me, what refined feelings can you after that expect of your children?"

And, regarding this argument as incontrovertible, grandmother added, in order to break off the conversation:

"However, everybody has his own opinion upon that matter."

The princess did not answer, and only smiled condescendingly, wishing thus to say that she forgave this queer prejudice in a person whom she respected so much.

"Ah, introduce me to your young people," said she, looking at us and smiling politely.

We rose, and, fixing our eyes upon the face of the princess, did not know in the least what to do in order to prove that we had become acquainted.

"Kiss the hand of the princess," said papa.

"I ask you to love your old aunt," said she, kissing Volódya's hair. "Though I am but distantly related to you, I count not by degrees of relationship, but by ties of friendship," she added, speaking more especially to grand-

mother, but grandmother was still dissatisfied with her, and said:

"Ah, my dear, do we nowadays count such relationship?"

"This one will be a worldly young man," said papa, pointing to Volódya, "and this one a poet," he added, while I was kissing the small dry hand of the princess, and with extraordinary distinctness imagined a switch in that hand, and under the switch a bench, and so forth.

"Which one?" asked the princess, keeping hold of my hand.

"This one, the little fellow with the locks," answered papa, smiling merrily.

"What have my locks done to him? Has he nothing else to talk about?" thought I, and went into the corner.

I had the oddest conceptions of beauty, — I even regarded Karl Ivánovich as the first beau in the world; but I knew full well that I was not good-looking, and in this opinion was not mistaken. Therefore, every reference to my looks was offensive to me.

I remember very well how once at dinner, — I was then six years old, — they were speaking of my exterior, and mamma was trying to find something comely in my face. She said that I had bright eyes and a pleasant smile, and, finally, yielding to father's proofs and to evidence, was compelled to admit that I was homely. Later, when I thanked her for the dinner, she patted my cheek, and said:

"Know this much, Nikólenka, no one will love you for your face, so you must try and be a good and clever boy."

These words not only convinced me that I was not handsome, but also that I must try by all means to be a good and clever boy.

In spite of this, moments of despair frequently came over me. I imagined that there was no happiness in the world for a man with such a broad nose, fat lips, and

small gray eyes, as mine were. I asked God to do a miracle, and to change me into a handsome boy, and everything I then had, and everything I should ever have in the future, I would gladly have given for a pretty face.

XVIII.

PRINCE IVÁN IVÁNOVICH

WHEN the princess had listened to the poem and had showered praises on the author, grandmother softened, began to speak in French with her, stopped calling her "you, my dear," and invited her to visit us in the evening with all her children. The princess promised she would, and, after staying awhile, departed.

There came so many guests that day to congratulate grandmother that in the courtyard, near the entrance, there were always several carriages standing, the whole morning.

"*Bonjour, chère cousine,*" said one of the guests as he entered the room and kissed grandmother's hand.

He was a man of some seventy years of age, of tall stature, in a military uniform, with large epaulets, below the collar of which could be seen a large white cross, and with a calm, open countenance. I was struck by the freedom and simplicity of his movements. Although there was left but a small circle of scanty hair on the back of his head, and although the position of the upper lip gave clear evidence of the absence of teeth, his face was still one of remarkable beauty.

Prince Iván Ivánovich had, while still very young, made a brilliant career at the end of the last century, thanks to his noble character, fine looks, remarkable bravery, distinguished and powerful connections, and,

especially, luck. He remained in the service, and his ambition was soon so well satisfied, that there was nothing more for him to wish in that respect. He had carried himself from his very youth as if he had been preparing himself to occupy that illustrious place in the world where fate had later put him. Therefore, although in his brilliant and somewhat vain life, as in all other lives, there were annoyances, disappointments and failures, he not even once was false to his ever calm character, nor to his high ideals, nor to the fundamental tenets of religion and morality, and he earned universal respect not only on the basis of his high position, but on the basis also of his consistency and fortitude.

He was a man of mediocre mind, but, thanks to his position, which permitted him to look with disdain at all the vain tribulations of life, his ideals were of an elevated character. He was good and sympathetic, but somewhat cold and haughty in manner. That came from his being placed in a position where he could be useful to many, so that by his coldness he endeavoured to guard himself against the unrelenting prayers and requests of people who wished to make use of his influence. His coldness, however, was softened by the condescending civility of a man of the great world. He was well educated and well read; but his education stopped at what he had acquired in youth, that is, at the end of the last century. He had read everything worth while that had been written in France during the eighteenth century in the field of philosophy and eloquence, knew thoroughly all the best productions of French literature, so that he could and did with pleasure quote passages from Racine, Corneille, Boileau, Molière, Montaigne, Fénelon; he was brilliantly versed in mythology, and with benefit had studied, in French translations, the ancient monuments of epic poetry; he had a fair knowledge of history, which he drew from Ségur; but he did not have the least concep-

tion of mathematics, beyond arithmetic, nor of physics, nor of contemporaneous literature; he could in a conversation politely suppress, or even express, a few commonplaces about Goethe, Schiller, and Byron, but he never had read them.

In spite of this French classical education, of which there are but few examples left now, his conversation was simple, and this simplicity at the same time hid his ignorance of certain things, and also gave evidence of his agreeable manner and indulgence. He was a great enemy of all originality, maintaining that originality was a trick of people in bad society. Society was a matter of necessity to him, wherever he happened to be; whether in Moscow, or abroad, he always lived in the same open fashion, and upon certain days received the whole city at his house. The prince was on such a footing in the city, that an invitation from him could serve as a passport into all the parlours, that many young and beautiful women gladly offered him their rosy cheeks, which he kissed, as it were, with the feeling of a father, and that apparently distinguished and decent people expressed indescribable joy when they were admitted to his receptions.

There were but few people left to the prince, like grandmother, who were of the same circle, the same bringing up, the same point of view, and the same age with him, so he particularly valued his old friendship with her, and always showed her great respect.

I did not get tired looking at the prince; the respect which everybody showed him, the large epaulets, the particular joy which grandmother expressed upon seeing him, and the fact that he alone, evidently, was not afraid of her, conversed with her entirely at his ease, and even had the courage to call her "*ma cousine*," inspired in me a respect for him, equal to, if not greater than, that which I felt for my father. When they showed him my poem, he called me to him and said:

"Who knows, *ma cousine*, maybe he will be another Derzhávin."

Saying this, he gave me a painful pinch in my cheek. If I did not cry out loud, it was only because I decided to take it as a favour.

The guests departed, papa and Volódya went out; in the drawing-room were left the prince, grandmother, and I.

"Why did not our dear Natálya Nikoláevna come?" suddenly asked Prince Iván Ivánovich, after a moment's silence.

"*Ah, mon cher!*" answered grandmother, lowering her voice, and putting her hand on the sleeve of his uniform: "She, no doubt, would have come, if she were at liberty to do what she pleases. She writes me that Pierre had proposed her going, but that she had herself declined because, says she, they had had no income this year. She writes, 'Besides, I have no reason to settle in Moscow this year with my whole house. Lyúbochka is too young yet; and as to the boys, who will be living with you, I am more at ease than if they stayed with me.' That is all very nice!" continued grandmother, in a tone that clearly showed she did not find it at all very nice. "The boys ought to have been sent here long ago, to learn something, and to get used to the world, for what kind of an education could they get in the country? The eldest will soon be thirteen years, and the other eleven. You have noticed, *mon cousin*, they are here like savages, — they do not know how to enter a room."

"I can't, however, understand," answered the prince, "what is the cause of their eternal complaint about ruinous conditions? *He* has some very good property, and Natásha's Khabárovka, where you and I, in times long gone, used to play theatre, I know like the five fingers of my hand; it is a magnificent estate, and ought to bring a nice income."

"I will tell you as a true friend," grandmother interrupted him, with a sad countenance, "it seems to me that these are only excuses, so as to give *him* a chance to live here alone, to frequent clubs and dinners, and to do God knows what; but she does not suspect anything. You know what an angelic soul she is; she has complete confidence in him. He had assured her that the children ought to be taken to Moscow, and that she ought to stay all alone, with the stupid governess, in the country, — and she believed him. If he were to tell her that the children ought to be whipped, as Princess Várvara Ilínichna whips them, she, I think, would at once consent," said grandmother, moving about in her chair, with an expression of deep disgust. "Yes, my friend," continued grandmother, after a moment's silence, and raising one of her two handkerchiefs, to wipe off a tear which had made its appearance, "I often think that *he* can neither value nor understand her, and that in spite of all her goodness, her love for him, and her desire to hide her grief, — I know that well, — she cannot be happy with him. Remember what I say, he will — "

Grandmother covered her face with her handkerchief.

"*Eh, ma bonne amie,*" said the prince, chidingly, "I see you have not become wiser in the least, — you eternally worry and weep for an imaginary sorrow. Really, are you not ashamed? I have known him for a long time, and I have known him as an attentive, good, and excellent husband, and, above all, as a very noble man, *un parfait honnêt homme.*"

Having involuntarily heard the conversation, which I ought not to have heard, I slipped out of the room on tiptoe, and in great agitation.

XIX.

THE IVINS

"VOLÓDYA! Volódya! The Ivins!" I cried out when I saw through the window three boys, in blue frogged coats with beaver collars, who, following their young, dandyish tutor, were crossing from the other side of the street toward our house.

The Ivins were some relatives of ours, and almost of the same age with us. Soon after our arrival in Moscow we became acquainted and friendly.

The second Ivin, Serézha, was a swarthy, curly-headed boy, with an upturned, firm nose, very fresh, red lips, which rarely were entirely closed, a somewhat prominent upper row of white teeth, beautiful, dark blue eyes, and an unusually lively countenance. He never smiled, but either looked quite serious, or laughed heartily with a melodious, clear-cut, and exceedingly attractive laughter. His original beauty struck me from the very start. I felt unconquerably attracted by him. It was enough for my happiness to see him, and all the powers of my soul were concentrated upon this desire. When I passed three or four days without seeing him, I grew lonely, and felt sad enough to weep. All my dreams, waking and sleeping, were of him. When I lay down to sleep, I wished that I might dream of him; when I closed my eyes, I saw him before me, and I treasured this vision as my greatest pleasure. I did not dare entrust this feeling to any one in the world, I valued it so.

Perhaps he was tired of feeling my restless eyes continually directed toward him, or he did not feel any sympathy for me, but he visibly preferred to play and to talk with Volódya, rather than with me. I was, nevertheless, satisfied, wished for nothing, demanded nothing, and was ready to sacrifice everything for him.

In addition to the passionate attraction with which he inspired me, his presence provoked in me, in no less degree, another feeling, — a fear of offending him, or in any way grieving him, and not pleasing him; perhaps, because his face bore a haughty expression, or because, disdaining my own looks, I too much valued the advantages of beauty in others, or, what is more likely, since it is a decided sign of love, I was as much in fear of him as I loved him. When Serézha spoke to me for the first time, I so completely lost myself from such unexpected happiness, that I grew pale, and blushed, and did not know what to answer him. He had a bad habit, when he was thinking of something, of resting his eyes on one object, blinking all the time, and twitching his nose and eyebrows. Everybody found that this habit spoiled his face, but I thought it so charming that I came to do the same, and a few days after my acquaintance with him, grandmother asked me whether my eyes were not hurting me, for I was jerking them like an owl. Not a word was ever said between us in regard to our love, but he felt his power over me, and tyrannically, though unconsciously, made use of it in our childish relations. However much I wished to tell him what there was upon my soul, I was too much afraid of him to attempt confidences, and tried to appear indifferent, and without murmuring submitted to him. At times his influence seemed hard and intolerable to me, but it was not in my power to escape it.

It is sad to recall that refreshing, beautiful feeling of unselfish and limitless love, which died without ebullition and without finding any response.

It is strange that, when I was a child, I always wanted to be big, and now, since I have ceased being small, I frequently wish I were. How often this desire, not to be like a child, had, in my relations to Serézha, arrested the feeling which was ready to pour forth, and caused me to simulate. I not only did not dare to kiss him, which I frequently wanted to do, to take his hand, to say how glad I was to see him, but did not even dare to call him Serézha, but only Sergyéy: such was the relation established between us. Every expression of sentiment was a proof of childishness, and he who permitted himself such a thing was still a *boy*. Although we had not yet passed those bitter experiences which lead grown people to be cautious and cold in their relations with each other, we deprived ourselves of the pure enjoyment of a tender, childlike attachment, through the one strange desire to imitate grown people.

I met the Ivins in the antechamber, greeted them, and flew headlong to grandmother; I announced to her that the Ivins had come, with an expression as if this news ought to make her completely happy. Then, without taking my eyes off Serézha, I followed him into the drawing-room and watched all his movements. While grandmother said that he had grown much, and directed her penetrating eyes upon him, I experienced that feeling of terror and hope which the artist must experience when he is waiting for the respected judge to pass a sentence upon his production.

The young tutor of the Ivins, Herr Frost, went, with grandmother's permission, down into the garden with us, seated himself on a green bench, picturesquely crossed his legs, placing between them his cane with a brass knob, and, with the expression of a man who is satisfied with his actions, lighted a cigar.

Herr Frost was a German, but of an entirely different type from our good Karl Ivánovich. In the first place he

spoke Russian correctly, and French with a bad pronunciation, and enjoyed, particularly among ladies, the reputation of being a very learned gentleman; in the second, he wore red moustaches, a large ruby pin in a black satin cravat, the ends of which were tucked under his suspenders, and light blue pantaloons with changing hues and with foot-straps; in the third, he was young, had a beautiful, self-satisfied expression, and unusually well-developed, muscular legs. It was evident he very much treasured this advantage; he regarded the effect as irresistible on persons of the feminine sex and, no doubt for this reason, tried to place his legs in a most noticeable position, and, whether he was standing or sitting, continually moved his thighs. It was the type of a young Russian German, who wished to be a beau and a Lovelace.

We had a merry time in the garden. The game of robbers went on as nicely as possible; but an incident came very near putting a stop to it. Serézha was the robber. In running after the travellers, he tripped, and in full career struck his knee against a tree with such force that I thought he would break to splinters. Although I was the rural police, and my duty consisted in catching him, I went up to him sympathetically, and asked him whether he had hurt himself very painfully. Serézha was furious, he clenched his fists, stamped his feet, and, in a voice which showed conclusively that he had hurt himself very much, cried out to me:

"What is that? After this, there is no game! Well, why do you not catch me, why do you not catch me?" he repeated several times, looking away at Volódya and the elder Ivin, who represented the travellers and leaped up and down the path; then he suddenly shouted and with loud laughter rushed forward to catch them.

I can't tell how that heroic act struck and captivated me. In spite of his terrible pain, he not only did not

weep, but he did not even show that he had been hurt, and did not for a minute forget the game.

Soon after that, when Ilínka Grap joined our company and we went up-stairs before dinner, Serézha had occasion to captivate me even more and to impress me with his remarkable manliness and fortitude of character.

Ilínka Grap was the son of a poor foreigner, who had once lived at my grandfather's. He was in some way under obligations to him, and for some reason regarded it as his duty to send his son to us as often as possible. If he thought that our acquaintance would afford his son any honour or pleasure, he was in this respect completely mistaken, because we not only were not friendly with Ilínka, but turned our attention to him only when we wanted to make fun of him. Ilínka was a boy of about thirteen years of age, thin, tall, pale, with a birdlike face, and a good-natured, submissive expression. He was dressed very poorly, but was always so copiously covered with pomatum that we used to assert that on a warm day the pomatum melted on Grap's head and ran under his blouse. When I think of him now, I find that he was a very obliging, quiet, and good boy; but then he appeared to me such a contemptible being that it was not worth while to pity him or even to think of him.

When the game of robbers stopped, we went up-stairs, and began to show off and to brag before each other with all kinds of gymnastic tricks. Ilínka looked at us with a timid smile of wonderment, and when it was proposed that he should do likewise, he declined, saying that he did not have any strength. Serézha was wonderful; he took off his blouse; his face and eyes were red, for he continually laughed and tried new tricks: he jumped over three chairs placed in a row, turned somersaults through the whole length of the room, stood on his head on Tatíschev's dictionaries, which he had placed in the middle of the room in the shape of a pedestal, and did

such funny tricks with his feet that it was impossible to keep from laughing. After this last peformance, he thought for a moment, winked, and suddenly went up to Ilínka with a very serious expression in his face: "Try that; really it is not hard." Noticing that the eyes of all were directed upon him, Grap blushed and with a scarcely audible voice assured us that he was in no way capable of doing it.

"Now, really, why does he not want to do it? Is he a girl? What? He must, by all means, stand on his head!"

And Serézha took his hand.

"By all means, by all means on his head!" we all cried, and surrounded Ilínka, who was perceptibly frightened and pale. We took his hands and pulled him to the dictionaries.

"Let me, I'll do it alone! You will tear my blouse!" cried the unfortunate victim. But these cries of despair only encouraged us more. We were dying with laughter, and the green blouse cracked in all its seams.

Volódya and the elder Ivin bent down his head and placed it on the dictionaries. Serézha and I got hold of the poor boy's thin legs, which he waved in all directions, rolled up his pantaloons to his knees, and with loud laughter stretched his legs in the air. The younger Ivin sustained the equilibrium of his body.

It so happened that after the noisy laughter we all suddenly grew silent, and it was so quiet in the room that we could hear the heavy breathing of poor Grap. That moment I was not entirely convinced that all this was funny and jolly.

"Now he is a fine fellow!" said Serézha, slapping him with his hand.

Ilínka was silent, and in trying to free himself, threw his legs in all directions. During one of these desperate movements, his heel struck Serézha's eye so painfully that

Serézha at once dropped his legs, put his hand to his eye, from which tears began to flow against his will, and gave Ilínka a blow with all his might. Ilínka was no longer supported by us, and fell to the floor like a lifeless mass. He could only say through tears:

"Why do you torment me so?"

The pitiful figure of poor Ilínka, with his tearful face, dishevelled hair, and tucked-up pantaloons, underneath which could be seen the unblackened boot-legs, struck us forcibly; we were all silent and endeavoured to smile.

Serézha was the first to come to his senses.

"He is an old woman, and a cry baby," he said, lightly touching him with his foot. "It is impossible to play with him. Now, that will do, get up."

"I told you you were a naughty boy," angrily cried Ilínka, and, turning away, sobbed out loud.

"Oh, he strikes with his heels, and then he calls names!" cried Serézha, taking a dictionary in his hands and swinging it over the head of the unfortunate boy, who did not even think of defending himself, but covered his head with his hands.

"Take this, and this! Let us leave him, if he does not know what jokes are. Let us go down-stairs," said Serézha, laughing in an unnatural manner.

I looked sympathetically at the poor fellow, who lay upon the floor, and, hiding his face in a dictionary, wept so much that I thought he would certainly die of the convulsions with which his body was shaking.

"O Sergyéy!" said I to him, "why did you do that?"

"I declare! I did not cry, I hope, when I almost crushed my leg to the bone!"

"Yes, that is so," thought I, "Ilínka is nothing but a cry baby, and Serézha is a brave fellow. Oh, what a brave fellow!"

It did not occur to me that the poor boy was really not crying so much from physical pain as from the thought

that five boys, whom he, no doubt, liked, had without any reason conspired to hate and persecute him.

I positively am not able to explain the cruelty of my act. How is it I did not go up to him, did not defend, or console him? What had become of the sentiment of compassion which used to make me sob at the sight of a young jackdaw thrown out of its nest, or of a pup that was to be thrown over the fence, or a chicken that the cook-boy took out to kill for the soup?

Is it possible this beautiful sentiment was choked in me through my love for Serézha, and my desire to appear before him just such a brave fellow as he was? This love and desire to appear brave were no enviable qualities, for they produced the only dark spots on the pages of my childhood memories.

XX.

GUESTS ARE COMING

To judge from the unusual activity which was noticeable in the buffet, from the bright illumination which gave a new, festive appearance to the old, familiar objects in the drawing-room and parlour, and, more especially, to judge from the fact that Prince Iván Ivánovich had sent his music, there was to be a large gathering of people in the evening.

At the noise of each carriage that passed by, I ran to the window, put my hands to my temples and to the pane, and with impatient curiosity looked into the street. From the darkness, which at first hid all the objects outside the window, slowly emerged: right opposite, the familiar bench with the lamp-post; diagonally across, a large house, with two windows below lighted up; in the middle of the street, some Jehu, with two occupants in his vehicle, or an empty coach, returning home leisurely. Suddenly a carriage drove up to the entrance, and I, quite sure that it must be the Ivins, who had promised to arrive early, ran down to meet them in the antechamber. Instead of the Ivins, appeared, after the liveried arm which had opened the door, two ladies, one, tall, in a blue cloak with a sable collar, the other, small, all wrapped in a green shawl, underneath which could be seen only tiny feet in fur boots. Without paying any attention to my presence in the antechamber, though I had regarded it as my duty to bow to

them at their arrival, the smaller lady walked up to the taller, and stopped in front of her. The tall lady unwound the kerchief that completely hid the head of the small lady and unbuttoned her cloak. When the liveried lackey received these things in his keeping, and had taken off her fur boots, there issued from that bundled-up being a beautiful girl twelve years of age, in a short, open muslin dress, white pantalets, and tiny black shoes. Over her white neck was a black velvet ribbon, her head was all in dark blond curls which so beautifully encased her pretty face in front, and her bare neck behind, that I should not have believed anybody, not even Karl Ivánovich, that they curled in this way because, ever since morning, they had been tied in bits of the *Moscow Gazette*, and because they had been curled with hot curling-irons. It seemed to me she was born that way, with her curly head.

The striking feature of her face was the unusual size of her bulging, half-closed eyes, which formed a strange, but pleasant contrast with the tiny mouth. Her little lips were closed, and her eyes looked so serious that the general expression of her face was such that one did not expect a smile from it, and, consequently, her smile was the more enchanting.

Trying not to be noticed, I slunk through the door of the parlour, and thought it necessary to walk up and down, pretending that I was deep in thought, and that I did not know that guests had come. When the guests reached the middle of the parlour, I, as it were, came to, scuffed, and announced to them that grandmother was in the sitting-room. Madame Valákhin, whose face I liked very much, especially since I discovered in it a resemblance to the face of her daughter Sónichka, graciously nodded her head to me.

Grandmother was apparently very glad to see Sónichka, called her to her, fixed a lock upon her head, which had fallen on her forehead, and, looking fixedly at her, said:

"*Quelle charmante enfant!*" Sónichka smiled, blushed, and looked so sweet, that I, too, blushed, looking at her.

"I hope you will not be lonely at my house, dear girl," said grandmother, raising her face by the chin. "I ask you to have a good time and dance as much as possible. Here are already one lady and two gentlemen" she added, speaking to Madame Valákhin, and touching my hand.

This way of connecting me with herself was so pleasing that it made me blush once more.

As I felt that my bashfulness was increasing, and hearing the rumble of an approaching carriage, I thought it necessary to withdraw. In the antechamber I found Princess Kornákov with a son and an incredible number of daughters. Her daughters had all the same looks, they all resembled the princess, and they were all homely, so that not one of them arrested the attention. After doffing their cloaks and boas, they suddenly began to speak in thin voices, fluttered about, and laughed at something, no doubt because there were so many of them. Etienne was a boy of about fifteen years of age, tall, flabby, with a washed-out face, sunken, blue-ringed eyes, and enormous arms and legs for his age. He was awkward, and his voice was uneven and harsh, but he seemed to be satisfied with himself, and was just the kind of boy I had expected of one who was whipped with switches.

We stood quite a while facing and examining each other, without saying a word. Then we moved up to each other and, it seems, were about to kiss, but having taken another look at one another, somehow changed our minds. When the dresses of all his sisters had rustled by us, I asked him, in order to start a conversation, whether they had not been crowded in the carriage.

"I do not know," he answered, carelessly. "You know, I never travel in the carriage, because, the moment I seat myself in it, I get a sick headache, and mamma knows that. When we go out for the evening, I always take my

place on the coachman's box, — it's jollier, — I can see everything, and Filípp lets me guide the horses, and sometimes I take the whip, too. And those that drive by sometimes get it," he added, with an expressive gesture. "It's nice!"

"Your Grace," said a lackey, who had just entered the antechamber, "Filípp wants to know what you have deigned to do with the whip?"

"How? What? I gave it back to him."

"He says you didn't."

"Well, then I hung it on the lamp-post."

"Filípp says that it is not on the lamp-post either, and you had better admit that you have lost it, and so Filípp will with his own money answer for your jokes," continued the angry lackey, becoming more and more animated.

The lackey, whose appearance was that of a respectable and stern man, evidently took Filípp's side with zeal, and was determined by all means to clear up the matter. By a natural feeling of delicacy, I stepped aside, as if I had not noticed anything; but the lackeys present acted differently, they came nearer, and approvingly looked at the old servant.

"Well, if I lost it, I lost it," said Etienne, avoiding any further explanations. "I'll pay him whatever the whip is worth. How funny!" he added, walking up to me, and drawing me after him into the drawing-room.

"No, excuse me, master, what are you going to pay with? I know how you pay. You have not paid Márya Vlásevna her two dimes these eight months; it is now two years you have not payed me, and Petrúsha —"

"Will you shut up?" cried out the young prince, turning pale from anger. "I will tell it all —"

"I will tell it all, I will tell it all!" said the lackey. "It is not good, your Grace!" he added with great emphasis, just as we entered the parlour, and as he was going with the cloaks to the clothes-press.

"That's it! That's it!" was heard somebody's approving voice in the antechamber behind us.

Grandmother had the special gift, by applying, with a certain tone, and at certain occasions, the plural and singular number of the pronoun of the second person, to express her opinion of people. Although she used "thou" and "you" in a reversed sense from the commonly accepted form, these shades received an entirely different meaning in her mouth. When the young prince walked up to her, she said a few words to him, calling him "you," and glanced at him with an expression of such contempt that if I had been in his place, I should have gone to pieces. But Etienne was, apparently, a boy of a different composition: he not only did not pay any attention to grandmother's reception, but not even to her person, and bowed to the whole company, with the greatest ease, if not very gracefully.

Sónichka occupied all my attention. I remember how I spoke with the greatest pleasure, whenever Volódya, Etienne, and I were conversing in a place in the parlour where Sónichka could be seen, and she could see and hear us — Whenever I had occasion to say something that, in my opinion, was either funny or clever, I spoke louder, and looked at the door that led into the drawing-room; but when we went over to another place, where we could not be seen or heard, I was silent, and no longer found any pleasure in the conversation.

The drawing-room and the parlour were slowly filling up with guests. Among them, as is always the case at evening parties for children, were some older ones, who would not let slip an opportunity of making merry and dancing, as if only to please the lady of the house.

When the Ivins arrived, the pleasure which I generally experienced at meeting Serézha gave way to a strange annoyance, because he would see Sónichka, and would be seen by her.

XXI.

BEFORE THE MAZURKA

"Oh, there will be some dancing here, I see," said Serézha, as he left the sitting-room, and took out of his pocket a new pair of kid gloves. "I must put on my gloves."

"What shall I do? We have no gloves," thought I, "and I must go up-stairs and look for some."

Although I rummaged through all the drawers, I found in one of them only our travelling mittens, and in another one kid glove, which could be of no use whatsoever to me: in the first place, because it was exceedingly old and dirty, in the second place, because it was entirely too large; and chiefly, because it lacked the middle finger, which had, no doubt, been cut off by Karl Ivánovich for some ailing hand. I put the remnant of a glove, however, on my hand, and attentively examined that spot on the middle finger which is always black with ink.

"Now, if Natálya Sávishna were here she certainly would find some gloves. I can't go down-stairs in this shape, because when they will ask me why I am not dancing, what am I to say? Neither can I remain here, because they will just as surely discover my absence. What am I to do?" said I, and waved my hands in despair.

"What are you doing here?" said Volódya, who had just run in. "Go, engage a lady, it will begin soon."

"Volódya," said I to him, showing him my hand with

two fingers sticking out of the soiled glove, and speaking in a voice which expressed a condition bordering on despair, "Volódya, you did not think of this!"

"Of what?" he said, impatiently. "Ah! Of the gloves," he added, quite indifferently, as he noticed my hand; "that is so, we have none, and we shall have to ask grandmother what she has to say about it." And, without reflecting a moment, he ran down-stairs.

The indifference with which he had referred to a subject that had seemed so important to me, calmed me, and I hastened into the drawing-room, entirely forgetful of the monstrous glove which was drawn over my left hand.

Cautiously approaching grandmother's chair, and lightly touching her mantilla, I said in a whisper to her:

"Grandmother, what are we to do? We have no gloves!"

"What is it, my dear?"

"We have no gloves," I repeated, coming nearer and nearer, and placing both my hands on the arm of the chair.

"What is this?" she said, seizing my left hand. "*Voyez, ma chère,*" she continued, turning to Madame Valákhin, "*voyez comme ce jeune homme s'est fait élégant pour danser avec votre fille!*"

Grandmother held my hand tightly, and with an inviting, though serious, glance looked at the persons present, until the curiosity of all the guests was satisfied, and the laughter had become universal.

I should have been very much aggrieved if Serézha had seen me, as I, shrinking from shame, was trying to pull away my hand; but I did not feel in the least ashamed before Sónichka, who was laughing so heartily that tears stood in her eyes and all her locks kept bobbing about her heated face. I understood that her laughter was too

loud and unnatural to be derisive; on the contrary, the fact that we were laughing both together, and looking at each other, brought me, in a certain way, nearer to her. The episode with the glove might have had a bad end, but it gave me this advantage, it put me on a free footing with a circle which always appeared to me as the most terrible, — the circle in the drawing-room. I no longer felt the least bashfulness in the parlour.

The suffering of bashful people arises from their uncertainty as to the opinion which is held in regard to them. The moment this opinion is clearly defined, — whatever it may be, — the suffering ceases.

How sweet Sónichka Valákhin was, when she danced a French quadrille opposite me, with the awkward young prince! How sweetly she smiled, when she gave me her hand in the *chaîne!* How sweetly her blond curls leaped about in even measure on her head! How naïvely she made *jeté-assemblé* with her tiny feet! In the fifth figure, when my lady ran from me to the opposite side, and I, waiting for the beat, was getting ready to do my solo, Sónichka solemnly compressed her lips and began to look to one side. But she was unnecessarily afraid for me. I boldly made *chassé en avant, chassé en arrière, glissade,* and, when I came near her, I playfully showed her the glove with the two towering fingers.

She burst into a loud laugh, and even more charmingly scraped her tiny feet on the parquetry. I remember how, when we formed a circle and joined hands, she bent her head, and, without letting my hand go, scratched her little nose against her glove. All that is standing vividly before my eyes, and I still hear the quadrille from the "Maid of the Danube," to the sounds of which it all took place.

Then came a second quadrille, which I danced with Sónichka. When I seated myself by her side, I felt quite uncomfortable, and did not have the slightest idea what

to talk to her about. When my silence was prolonged too much, I became frightened lest she should take me for a fool, and I decided to free her from such a delusion, at whatever cost. "*Vous êtes une habitante de Moscou?*" said I to her and, after an affirmative answer, continued: "*Et moi, je n'ai encore jamais fréquenté la capitale,*" calculating particularly on the effect of the word *fréquenter*. I felt, however, that, though the beginning was very brilliant, and gave complete proof of my superior knowledge of French, I was not able to continue the conversation in that strain. It was still some time before our turn to dance would come, and the silence was renewed. I looked in anguish at her, wishing to know what impression I had made, and expecting her to help me.

"Where did you find such a killing glove?" she suddenly asked me. This question afforded me great pleasure and relief. I explained that the glove belonged to Karl Ivánovich, and somewhat ironically expatiated on his person, telling her how funny he was when he took off his red cap, and how he once, dressed in a green wadded coat, fell from his horse straight into a puddle, and so on. The quadrille passed unnoticed. All that was very well. But why did I refer to Karl Ivánovich in derision? Should I have lost Sónichka's good opinion if I had described him to her with all the love and respect which I felt for him?

When the quadrille was over, Sónichka said "*Merci*" to me with as sweet an expression as if I really had earned her gratitude. I was in ecstasy, all beside myself with joy, and could not recognize myself: whence came my courage, confidence, and even boldness? "There is not a thing that could confuse me," thought I, carelessly walking up and down the parlour; "I am ready for everything."

Serézha proposed to me to be his vis-à-vis. "All right," said I, "although I have no lady, I will find one." Casting a searching glance over the whole parlour, I noticed that

all were engaged, except one young lady, who was standing at the door of the drawing-room. A tall young man was just approaching her, as I concluded, in order to invite her. He was within two steps of her, and I at the opposite end of the parlour. In the twinkling of an eye I flew, gracefully sliding over the parquetry, across the whole distance which separated us, and, shuffling my feet before her, with a firm voice, I invited her to the contradance. The tall young lady smiled condescendingly, gave me her hand, and the young man was left without a lady.

I had such a consciousness of my power that I did not even pay any attention to the annoyance of the young man; but I found out later that he had asked who that shaggy boy was that had leaped in front of him and had taken his lady away right before his face.

XXII.

THE MAZURKA

THE young man whose lady I had taken away was dancing a mazurka, and leading it as the first pair. He leaped from his seat, holding his lady's hand, and instead of making "*pas de Basques*," as Mimi had taught us, simply ran ahead. When he reached the corner, he stopped, spread his legs, struck the floor with his heel, turned about, and hopping, ran ahead.

As I had no lady for the mazurka, I sat behind grandmother's high chair and observed.

"What is he doing there?" I reflected. "That is not at all the way Mimi taught us; she assured us that everybody danced a mazurka on tiptoe, moving the feet evenly and in a circle; and now it seems that they dance it quite differently. There the Ivins, and Etienne, and all are dancing, but none of them make '*pas de Basques;*' and even Volódya has learned the new fashion. It is not at all bad! And what a sweet girl Sónichka is! There, she has started again —" I felt exceedingly happy.

The mazurka came to an end. A few elderly men and women walked up to grandmother, in order to bid her good-bye, and departed. Avoiding the dancers, the lackeys were carefully carrying things for the tables into the back rooms. Grandmother was visibly tired, spoke as if against her will, and prolonged her words beyond measure. The musicians for the thirtieth time lazily began the same motive. The tall young lady, with whom I had

danced, noticed me, while making a figure, and, smiling treacherously, — probably, because she wished to please grandmother by it, — brought Sónichka and one of the numberless princesses to me. "*Rose ou hortie*," she said to me.

"Oh, you are here!" said grandmother, turning around in her chair. "Go, my dear, go!"

Although I then felt more like hiding my head behind grandmother's chair than issuing from it, there was no refusing. I got up, said "*Rose*," and timidly looked at Sónichka. I had no time to come to my senses, when somebody's hand in a white glove passed through my arm, and the princess with the pleasantest smile rushed ahead, not suspecting in the least that I was completely ignorant of what I was to do with my feet.

I knew that "*pas de Basques*" was out of place and indecent, and might bring shame upon me; but the familiar sounds of the mazurka, acting upon my hearing, gave a certain direction to my acoustic nerves, which, in their turn, transmitted the motion to my legs; and these, quite involuntarily and to the surprise of the spectators, began to evolve the fatal round and even figures on the tiptoes. As long as we proceeded in a straight direction, things went fairly well, but at turning I noticed that if I did not use proper precaution I should fly ahead. To avoid such an unpleasantness, I stopped with the intention of producing the same figures which the young man had so beautifully produced in the leading pair. But the very moment I spread my legs and was about to leap up, the princess hurriedly ran about me, and looked at my legs with an expression of blank surprise and curiosity. That look undid me. I so completely lost myself, that instead of dancing, I began, in the strangest manner and entirely out of keeping with the measure of the dance or anything else, to wriggle my feet in one spot, and finally stopped entirely. Everybody was looking at me, some in wonder-

ment, some with curiosity, some in derision, and some with compassion. Grandmother alone remained indifferent.

"*Il ne fallait pas danser, si vous ne savez pas!*" was heard the angry voice of papa over my very ear, and, giving me a light push, he took the hand of my lady, made the round with her in the ancient fashion, with the loud approval of the spectators, and brought her back to her seat. The mazurka was over soon after that.

"O Lord! Why dost Thou punish me so severely!"

. . . . . .

"Everybody hates me, and will always hate me. My road is barred to everything: to friendship, to love, to honours, — everything is lost! Why did Vólódya make signs to me, which everybody could see, but which did not help me? Why did that abominable princess look at my legs? Why did Sónichka — she is a dear, but why did she smile at me then? Why did papa blush and seize my hand? Is it possible he, too, was ashamed of me? Oh, that is terrible! I am sure, if mamma had been here, she would not have blushed for her Nikólenka." And my imagination was transported far, after that sweet image. I recalled the meadow in front of the house, the tall linden-trees of the garden, the clear pond, over which the swallows circled, the azure sky, on which white, transparent clouds hovered, the fragrant ricks of newly mown hay; and many other peaceful, glowing recollections arose in my distracted imagination.

XXIII.

AFTER THE MAZURKA

At supper, the young man, who had danced with the leading pair, seated himself at our children's table, and directed his especial attention to me, which would have flattered my egotism greatly, if I had been able to have any sensations after the misfortune which had befallen me. But the young man, it seemed, was anxious to make me feel happy: he joked with me, called me a brave fellow, and, when none of the grown people were looking on, poured into my wineglass wine from all kinds of bottles, and insisted that I should drink it. Toward the end of the supper, the servant filled about one-fourth of my glass with champagne from a bottle that was covered with a napkin, but the young man demanded that he should fill it to its brim. He compelled me to gulp it down at one draught, and I felt a gentle warmth permeating my body, and took a special liking to my merry protector, and for some unknown reason laughed out loud.

Suddenly the sounds of "grandfather's" dance were heard in the parlour, and people rose from the table. My friendship for the young man came to an end then and there. He went over to the grown people, and I did not dare to follow him, but went up to listen, with curiosity, to what Madame Valákhin was saying to her daughter.

"Only half an hour longer," Sónichka said, convincingly.

"Really, my angel, it is impossible."

"Just do it for my sake, please," she said, fondling her.

"Well, will you be happy, if I shall be ill to-morrow?" said Madame Valákhin, smiling carelessly.

"Ah, you have consented! Shall we stay?" called out Sónichka, jumping up with delight.

"What am I to do with you? Go, dance! Here is a cavalier for you," she said, pointing at me.

Sónichka gave me her hand, and we ran into the parlour.

The wine which I had drunk and the presence and merriment of Sónichka caused me completely to forget the unfortunate incident of the mazurka. I did the funniest tricks with my feet: now I imitated a horse, and ran at a quick trot, proudly raising my feet; now I rattled them on one spot, like a wether that is angered at a dog, and all the time laughed from the depth of my soul, not being in the least concerned what impression I produced upon the spectators. Sónichka, too, did not cease laughing: she laughed because we were circling around and holding each other's hands; she laughed at some elderly gentleman, who slowly raised his feet in order to step across a handkerchief, making it appear that it was very hard for him to do; and she nearly died with laughter, when I jumped almost to the ceiling, to show her my agility.

As I passed through grandmother's cabinet, I looked at myself in the glass: my face was perspiring, my hair dishevelled; my tufts stuck in every direction; but the general expression of my face was so happy, good-natured, and healthy, that I was pleased with myself.

"If I were always as I am now," thought I, "I should not fail to please others."

But when I again glanced at the pretty face of my lady, I found in it, in addition to the expression of merriment, health, and carelessness, which had pleased me in my own, so much of refined and gentle beauty, that I

grew angry at myself: I understood how foolish it was for me to hope that I should be able to direct toward myself the attention of so charming a creature.

I could not hope that my feelings would be reciprocated, and I did not even think of it: my soul was full of happiness as it was. I did not imagine that one could demand any greater happiness than the sentiment of love, which filled all my soul with delight, and that one could desire anything other than that this sentiment should never come to an end. I was satisfied as it was. My heart fluttered like a dove, the blood continually rushed to it, and I felt like weeping.

When we passed through the corridor, near the dark lumber-room under the staircase, I cast a glance at it, and thought: What happiness that would be if it were possible to pass an eternity with her in that dark lumber-room, and if no one knew that we were living there.

"Don't you think we have had a jolly time to-night?" I said in a quiet, quivering voice, and increased my steps, being frightened not so much at what I had said, as at what I was about to say.

"Yes, very!" she answered, turning her head to me with such an open and kind expression that I ceased being afraid.

"Especially after supper. But if you knew how sorry I am (I had intended to say "unhappy") that you are going to leave soon, and that we shall not see each other again!"

"Why should we not see each other?" she said, looking sharply at the tips of her little shoes, and passing her fingers over the trellis by which we were walking. "Every Tuesday and Friday mamma and I drive out to the Tver Boulevard. Don't you ever drive out?"

"I will certainly ask next Tuesday, and if they will not let me, I will run there all alone, without a cap. I know the road well."

"Do you know what?" suddenly said Sónichka. "I always say 'thou' to the boys that come to see me. Let us speak 'thou' to each other! Dost thou want it?" she added, shaking her little head, and looking straight into my eyes.

We were just entering the parlour, and another lively part of the "grandfather's" dance was at that moment beginning. "I will, with — you," I said, when the music and noise could drown my words.

"With thee, not with you," Sónichka corrected me, and burst out laughing.

The "grandfather" came to an end, and I had not yet succeeded in using a single phrase with "thou," although I kept on composing such as would contain that pronoun several times. I did not have the courage for it. "Dost thou want?" and "Come thou" resounded in my ears, and produced a kind of intoxication: I saw nothing and nobody but Sónichka. I saw how they lifted her locks, pushed them behind her ears, and laid bare parts of her brow and temples which I had not yet seen. I saw her being wrapped in her green shawl so tightly that only the tip of her nose was visible. I noticed that if she had not made a small opening near her mouth with her rosy little fingers, she would certainly have strangled, and I saw how, while descending the staircase with her mother, she rapidly turned around to us, nodded her head, and disappeared behind the door.

Volódya, the Ivins, the young prince, and I, we all were in love with Sónichka and, standing on the staircase, saw her out with our eyes. I do not know whom in particular she greeted with the nod of her head, but at that moment I was firmly convinced that she meant it for me.

When I bade the Ivins good-bye, I very freely, even coldly, spoke with Serézha, and pressed his hand. If he understood that with that day he had lost my love and

his power over me, he doubtless was sorry for it, though he endeavoured to be as indifferent as possible.

It was the first time in my life that I was false to my love, and for the first time I experienced the pleasure of that sensation. It was a joy for me to exchange my worn-out sentiment of habitual loyalty for the fresh sentiment of love, full of mystery and uncertainty. Besides, to fall in love and cease loving at the same time means to love twice as much as before.

XXIV.

IN BED

"How could I have loved Serézha so long and so passionately?" I reflected, lying in bed. "No, he never understood, never could appreciate my love, and was not worthy of it. But Sónichka? What a charming girl! 'Dost thou want!' 'It is for thee to begin!'"

In my vivid representation of her face, I jumped up on all fours, then covered my head with my coverlet, tucked it all around me, and, when there were no openings left, lay down and, experiencing a gentle warmth, was lost in sweet dreams and memories. I fixed my immovable eyes upon the under side of the quilt, and saw her face as distinctly as an hour before. I mentally conversed with her, and that conversation gave me indescribable pleasure, though it had absolutely no sense, because it was composed of so many repetitions of "thou," "to thee," "thy," and "thine."

These dreams were so distinct that I could not fall asleep from pleasurable agitation, and was desirous of sharing the superabundance of my happiness with somebody.

"Darling!" I said almost aloud, abruptly turning around on my other side. "Volódya, are you asleep?"

"No," he answered me with a sleepy voice, "what is it?"

"I am in love, Volódya, desperately in love with Sónichka!"

"Well, what of it?" he answered me, stretching himself.

"O Volódya! You can't imagine what is going on in me. I had just rolled in my coverlet when I saw her and heard her so distinctly, so distinctly, that it is really wonderful! And do you know? when I lie and think of her, I feel sad, God knows why, and I want to cry awfully."

Volódya moved restlessly.

"I wish only for one thing," continued I, "and that is, always to be with her, always to see her, and nothing else. Are you in love? Confess really, do, Volódya!"

It is strange, but I wanted everybody to be in love with Sónichka, and I wanted everybody to talk about it.

"That is not your business," said Volódya, turning his face toward me. "Maybe."

"You do not want to sleep, you only pretended!" I called out, when I noticed by his burning eyes that he did not even think of sleeping, and had thrown off his coverlet. "Let us talk about her. Don't you think she is fine? She is so charming that if she were to command me: 'Nikólenka, jump out of the window!' or, 'throw yourself into the fire!' I swear to you," said I, "I should with pleasure do so. Oh, what a charming girl!" I added, vividly imagining her before me; and, completely to enjoy that image, I abruptly turned on my other side and stuck my head under the pillows. "Volódya, I want to cry awfully."

"You are a fool!" he said, smiling, and then kept silent for a moment. "I am entirely different from you; I think that if it were possible, I should want at first to sit by her side and talk with her — "

"Oh, so you are in love, too?" I interrupted him.

"Then," continued Volódya, smiling gently, "then I should kiss her little fingers, her eyes, lips, nose, feet, — I should kiss her all over — "

"Nonsense!" I cried out from under my pillows.

"You do not understand anything," contemptuously said Volódya.

"No, I understand, but you do not, and you are talking nonsense," said I, through tears.

"But there is no reason for weeping. A regular girl!"

XXV.

THE LETTER

On the 16th of April, almost six months after the day which I have just described, father came up-stairs, during classes, and announced to us that we were going home with him that very night. Something pinched me at my heart, when I heard the news, and my thoughts at once reverted to my mother.

Our sudden departure was the result of the following letter:

Petróvskoe, April 12th.

"I received your kind letter of April 3d just a little while ago, at ten o'clock in the evening, and, as is my custom, I am replying to it immediately. Fédor brought it from town yesterday, but as it was late, he handed it to Mimi this morning. Mimi did not give it to me all day, under the pretext that I was nervous and ill. I had, in reality, a little fever and, to confess, this is the fourth day that I have not been feeling well and have not left the bed.

"Please, do not get frightened, my dear one. I feel quite well, and, if Iván Vasílich will permit, shall get up to-morrow.

"On Friday of last week I went out driving with the children; but at the very entrance upon the highway, near the bridge which always frightens me so, the horses stuck in the mud. It was a fine day, and I thought I should

walk as far as the highway, while they extricated the carriage. When I reached the chapel I grew very tired, and sat down to rest; but before the people came to pull out the carriage, almost half an hour passed, and I began to feel cold, particularly in my feet, because I had on thin-soled shoes, and they were wet. After dinner I felt a chill and a fever, but kept on my feet, as is my habit, and after tea sat down to play duets with Lyúbochka. (You will not recognize her, — she has made such progress!) But imagine my surprise when I discovered that I could not count the beats. I started several times to count, but everything got mixed up in my head, and I heard strange sounds in my ears. I counted: one, two, three, and then suddenly: eight, fifteen; and (which is the main thing), I knew I was not doing right, but could not correct myself. Finally Mimi came to my aid, and almost using force, put me to bed. Here you have, my dear one, a detailed account of how I grew ill, and how it is all my fault. The next day I had a pretty high fever, and our good old Iván Vasílich came. He has been staying at our house ever since, and he promised me he would soon let me out in the air again. A splendid old man is this Iván Vasílich! When I was feverish and delirious he stayed at my bed all night long, without closing his eyes; but now, seeing that I am writing, he is staying with the girls in the sofa-room, and I can hear from my chamber how he is telling them German stories and how they, listening to them, are dying with laughter.

"*La belle Flamande*, as you call her, has been my guest for two weeks, because her mother has gone to make visits, and she proves her sincere attachment by her care of me. She confides all the secrets of her heart to me. With her pretty face, good heart, and youth, she could become a beautiful girl in every respect if she were in good hands; but in the society in which she lives, to judge by her own story, she will be completely ruined.

It has occurred to me that if I did not have so many children of my own, I should be doing a good act if I took her into my house.

"Lyúbochka wanted to write to you herself, but she has torn her third sheet, and she says: 'I know what a scoffer papa is; if I make one mistake, he will show it to everybody.' Kátenka is as dear as ever, and Mimi is as good and tiresome.

"Now let us speak of something serious: you are writing me that your affairs are not going well this winter, and that you will be compelled to take some Khabárovka money. It is strange to me that you even ask my consent. Does not that which belongs to me equally belong to you?

"You are so good, my dear one, that for fear of grieving me you are hiding the actual condition of your affairs, but I guess you have lost much at cards, and I am not in the least, I swear it, aggrieved at the fact, so that, if this affair can be straightened out, please don't spend much thought over it, or vainly worry about the matter. I have become accustomed not to count on your winnings for our children, not even, you will forgive me for saying so, on your property. Your winnings give me as little pleasure as your losses grieve me; I am only grieved at your unfortunate passion for gaming, which robs me of a part of your tender attachment for me, and compels you to tell such bitter truths as those you are telling me now, — and God knows how that pains me! I never cease praying to Him that He may deliver us, not from poverty (what is poverty?), but from that terrible condition when the interests of our children, which I shall have to protect, will come in conflict with our own. Thus far God has fulfilled my prayer; you have not crossed the one line, after which we shall have either to sacrifice our property, which no longer belongs to us, but to our children, or — it is terrible to think of it, and yet we are threatened by

a terrible misfortune. Yes, it is a heavy cross the Lord has sent us both.

"You are writing me about the children, and return to our old quarrel: you ask my permission to send them to some educational establishment. You know my prejudice against such an education.

"I do not know, my dear one, whether you will agree with me; in any case, I implore you, for the sake of our love, to promise me that as long as I am alive, and after my death, if it shall please God to separate us, this shall not happen.

"You tell me that it will be necessary for you to go to St. Petersburg about our affairs. Christ be with you, my friend! go and come back as soon as possible! We all feel very lonely without you. The spring is remarkably fine; the balcony door has already been put out; the path in the greenhouse was completely dry four days ago; the peaches are in full bloom; only here and there patches of snow are left; the swallows have returned; and to-day Lyúbochka has brought me the first spring flowers. The doctor says that in three or four days I shall be quite well again, and able to breathe the fresh air, and warm myself in the April sun. Good-bye, my dear one! Please, do not worry, neither about my illness nor about your losses; settle your affairs as soon as possible, and come back to us with the children for the whole summer. I am making wonderful plans as to how we are going to pass it, and you only are wanting to materialize them."

The following part of the letter was in French, in a closely written and uneven hand, and upon a different piece of paper. I translate it word for word:

"Don't believe what I am writing you about my illness; nobody suspects to what degree it is serious. I alone know that I shall never rise from bed again. Do

not lose a single minute, and come at once, and bring the children with you. Maybe, I shall live long enough to embrace and bless them; that is my one last wish. I know what a blow I am striking you, but you would all the same, sooner or later, receive it from me, or from others. Let us try with fortitude and with hope in the mercy of God to bear this misfortune! Let us submit to His will!

"Do not imagine that what I write is the delirium of a diseased imagination; on the contrary, my thoughts are unusually clear at this moment, and I am perfectly calm. Do not console yourself in vain with the hope that these are false and dim presentiments of a fearsome soul. No, I feel, I know, — and I know because it has pleased God to reveal it to me, — that I am to live only a short time.

"Will my love for you and my children end together with my life? I have come to understand that this is impossible. I feel too strongly this minute, to think that the feeling without which I cannot understand existence should ever be annihilated. My soul cannot exist without love for you; and I know that it will exist for ever, for this reason alone, if for no other, that such a feeling as my love could not have originated, if it were ever to come to an end.

"I shall not be with you; but I am firmly convinced that my love will never leave you, and this thought is so comforting to my soul that I await my approaching death in peace and without fear.

"I am calm, and God knows that I have always looked at death as a transition to a better life; but why do tears choke me? Wherefore are the children to lose their beloved mother? Why should such a blow be struck you? Why must I die, when your love has made me boundlessly happy?

"His holy will be done!

"I cannot write any more for tears. Maybe I shall

not see you again. So I thank you, my truest friend, for all the happiness with which you have surrounded me in this life; and there, I will ask God that He may reward you. Good-bye, my dear one! Remember that I shall be no more, but my love will never and in no place leave you. Good-bye, Volódya, good-bye, my angel! Good-bye, my Benjamin, my Nikólenka!

"Will they ever forget me?"

In this letter was enclosed a French note from Mimi, of the following contents:

"The sad presentiments, of which she tells you, have been only too well confirmed by the doctor. Last night she ordered this letter to be taken to the post. Thinking that she said that in her delirium, I waited until this morning, and decided to break the seal. No sooner had I opened it, than Natálya Nikoláevna asked me what I had done with the letter, and ordered me to burn it, if it had not yet been sent. She speaks of it continually, and assures us that it will kill you. Do not delay your journey, if you wish to see this angel before she has left you. Pardon this scrawl. I have not slept these three nights. You know how I love her!"

Natálya Sávishna, who had passed the whole night of the 11th of April in mother's chamber, told me that having written the first part of her letter, mamma put it near her on the table, and fell asleep.

"I myself," said Natálya Sávishna, "I must confess, dozed off in the chair, and the stocking fell out of my hands. Then in my sleep, about one o'clock, I heard her talk. I opened my eyes: there she, my little dove, was sitting in her bed, folding her arms just like this, and her tears were pouring down in three streams. 'So all is ended?' was all she said, and covered her face with her hands.

"I jumped up, and began to ask her what the matter was with her.

"'Ah, Natálya Sávishna, if you only knew whom I saw just now!'

"No matter how much I asked her, she would not answer me. She only ordered me to put the small table near her, then wrote something more in the letter, told me to seal it in her presence, and to send it away at once. After that everything went worse and worse."

XXVI.

WHAT AWAITED US IN THE COUNTRY

On the 25th of April we dismounted from the road carriage, at the veranda of the Petróvskoe house. When we left Moscow, papa was lost in thought, and upon Volódya's asking whether mamma was not ill, he looked at him with sadness, and silently nodded his head. During the journey, he became perceptibly calmer; but as we approached our home, his face assumed an even more sad expression, and when, upon leaving the carriage, he asked of Fóka, who came running out of breath: "Where is Natálya Nikoláevna?" his voice was not firm, and there were tears in his eyes. Good old Fóka stealthily looked at us, dropped his eyes, and, opening the door to the antechamber, answered, with his face turned away:

"This is the sixth day she has not left the chamber."

Mílka, who, as I later learned, had not stopped whining since the first day when mamma became ill, joyfully rushed up to father, jumped on him, whined, and licked his hands; but he pushed her aside and went into the sitting-room, thence into the sofa-room, from which a door led straight into mamma's chamber. The nearer he approached this room, the more his unrest was to be noticed in all his movements. As he entered the sofa-room, he walked on tiptoe, barely drew breath, and made the sign of the cross before he had the courage to turn the latch of the closed door. Just then, unkempt,

weeping Mimi came running in from the corridor. "Ah, Peter Aleksándrych!" she said in a whisper, with an expression of real despair, and then, noticing that papa was turning the latch of the door, added scarcely audibly: "You can't pass through here; you have to go in through the outer door."

Oh, how heavily all that acted upon my childish imagination, which was prepared for sorrow by some terrible presentiment!

We went into the maids' room. In the corridor we ran against fool Akím, who used to amuse us with his grimaces; at this moment he not only did not seem funny to me, but nothing struck me so painfully as the appearance of his meaningless, indifferent face. In the maids' room two servant girls, who were sitting at some work, rose to greet us, but the expression of their faces was so sad that I felt terribly. Passing through Mimi's room, papa opened the door of the chamber, and we entered. To the right of the door were two windows, which were darkened by shawls; at one of these, Natálya Sávishna was seated, with spectacles on her nose, and was knitting a stocking. She did not rise to kiss us, as she was in the habit of doing, but only raised herself a little, glanced at us through her spectacles, and her tears began to flow in streams. I did not like it at all that at the first sight of us they all started weeping, while just before they were calm.

To the left of the door stood a screen, behind the screen a bed, a small table, a medicine box, and a large armchair, in which the doctor was dozing. Near the bed stood a very blond young lady of remarkable beauty, in a white morning gown, and, rolling up her sleeves a little, she put ice to the head of mamma, whom I was able to see. This young lady was *la belle Flamande*, of whom mamma had written, and who later on was to play such an important part in the life of our whole family. The

moment we entered, she took one hand away from mamma's head, and arranged over her breast the folds of her gown, then said in a whisper: "She is unconscious."

I was in great anguish then, but I noticed all the details. It was almost dark in the room, and warm, and there was a mingled odour of mint, eau de cologne, camomile, and Hoffmann's drops. That odour struck me so powerfully that not only when I smell it, but even when I think of it, my imagination immediately transfers me into that gloomy, close room, and reproduces all the minutest details of that terrible moment.

Mamma's eyes were open, but she did not see anything. Oh, I shall never forget that terrible look! There was so much suffering expressed in it.

We were taken away.

When I later asked Natálya Sávishna about the last moments of my mother, she told me this:

"When you were taken away, my little dove kept on tossing for a long time, as though something were choking her here; then she dropped her head from the pillows, and fell asleep, as softly and calmly as if she were an angel of heaven. I had just gone out to see why they were not bringing the drink, — and when I came back, she, the treasure of my heart, had thrown off everything about her, and was beckoning to father. He bent down to her, but she evidently had no strength to say what she wanted; she only opened her lips, and began to sigh: 'My Lord! God! The children! The children!' I wanted to run for you, but Iván Vasílich stopped me, saying that it would excite her too much, and that it would be better not to call you. Then she only lifted her hand, and let it fall again. God knows what she meant to say by it! I think she was blessing you, though you were out of sight; and thus God has decreed that she should not see her children before her last moments. Then she raised herself, my little dove, folded

her little hands just like this, and then spoke in a voice that I can't repeat: 'Mother of God, do not desert them!' By this time the agony had reached her heart, and one might see by her eyes that the poor woman was suffering terribly: she fell back on her pillows, bit the sheet, and her tears began to flow in streams."

"Well, and then?"

Natálya could not speak any more: she turned her face away, and burst into tears.

Mamma had passed away amidst terrible sufferings.

XXVII.

GRIEF

THE next day, late in the evening, I wanted to take another look at her: overcoming an involuntary feeling of terror, I softly opened the door, and walked into the parlour on tiptoe.

In the middle of the room stood the coffin on a table; around it were burning candles in tall silver candlesticks; in the distant corner sat the sexton, and in a monotonous voice read the psalter.

I stopped at the door and began to look, but my eyes were so red with tears, and my nerves were so unstrung, that I could not make out anything. Everything was strangely running together: the light, the brocade, the velvet, the tall candlesticks, the rose-coloured lace-bordered pillow, the crown, the cap with its ribbons, and something translucent, of a wax-colour. I stood on a chair, in order to see her face; but I imagined I saw in the place where it ought to have been the same pale yellow, translucent object. I could not believe that it was her face. I began to look more closely at it, and by degrees recognized the familiar features which were so dear to me. I shuddered from terror, when I convinced myself that it was she. But why were her closed eyes so sunken? Why this terrible pallor, and the black spot under the transparent skin on one of her cheeks? Why was the expression of her whole face so severe and cold? Why were her lips so pale, and their position so beautiful,

so majestic, and expressing such an unearthly calm that a cold chill passed over my back and hair, as I looked at her?

I looked, and felt that a certain incomprehensible, irresistible power was attracting my eyes to that lifeless face. I riveted my gaze upon it, and my imagination painted for me pictures abloom with life and happiness. I forgot that the dead body, which was lying before me and at which I was looking meaninglessly, as at an object which had nothing in common with my memories, was *she*. I imagined her now in one, now in another situation: alive, merry, smiling; then I was suddenly struck by some feature in her pale face, upon which my eyes were resting; I recalled the terrible reality, and shuddered, but did not cease looking at it. And again dreams took the place of reality, and again the consciousness of reality destroyed my dreams. Finally my imagination grew tired, it no longer deceived me. The consciousness of reality also disappeared, and I completely forgot myself. I do not know how long I remained in that condition, and I do not know what it really was; I know only that I lost, for some time, the consciousness of my whole existence, and experienced some elevated, inexpressibly pleasant and sad sensation.

Maybe, as she was flying away to a better world, her beautiful soul looked back in sorrow at the one in which she left us. She noticed my sadness, took pity on me, and upon pinions of love, with a heavenly smile of sympathy, winged her way to earth, in order to console and bless me.

The door creaked, and another sexton entered the room to take the place of the first. That noise woke me, and the first thought that came to me was that inasmuch as I was not weeping, and was standing upon the chair in an attitude which had in it nothing of a touching nature, the sexton might take me for an unfeeling boy, who had

climbed upon the chair out of discomfort or curiosity; I made the sign of the cross, bowed, and fell to weeping.

As I now recall my impressions, I find that only that minute of self-forgetfulness was a real grief. Before and after the funeral, I did not stop weeping, and was sad, but I am ashamed to think of that sadness, because it was always mingled with some selfish feeling. Now it was the desire to show that I was grieved more than the rest, now the anxiety about the effect I was producing on the others, now an aimless curiosity, which caused me to make observations on Mimi's bonnet, and the faces of the people present. I hated myself because I did not experience exclusively a sentiment of sorrow, and endeavoured to conceal all the other feelings; for this reason my grief was not sincere nor natural. Besides, I experienced a certain pleasure from the knowledge that I was unhappy, and tried to awaken the consciousness of misfortune, and this egoistical feeling more than any other drowned my real sorrow in me.

Having slept soundly and calmly through the night, as is always the case after great bereavement, I awoke with dried eyes and soothed nerves. At ten o'clock we were called to the mass which was celebrated before the funeral. The room was filled with servants and peasants, who, all of them in tears, had come to bid their mistress farewell. During the service I wept decently, made the signs of the cross, and bowed to the ground, but I did not pray with sincerity, and was sufficiently indifferent; I was concerned about the new half-dress coat which they had put on me, and which was tight under my arms; I was thinking how to keep from soiling my pantaloons at the knees, and stealthily made observations upon all the people present. Father stood at the head of the coffin, was as pale as a sheet, and with evident difficulty restrained his tears. His tall stature in the black dress coat, his pale, expressive countenance, and his usual

graceful and confident movements, whenever he made the sign of the cross, bowed, reaching the floor with his hand, took the candle out of the priest's hands, or walked up to the coffin, were exceedingly effective; but I do not know why, I did not like his being able to produce such an effect at that particular moment.

Mimi was leaning against the wall and, it seemed, barely could stand on her feet; her dress was crushed and full of feathers, and her cap was on one side; her swollen eyes were red, her head was shaking; she sobbed without interruption in a heartrending voice, and continually covered her face with a handkerchief and with her hands. It seemed to me that she did so, in order to hide her face from the spectators, when resting a moment from her simulated sobs. I recalled how the day before she told father that mamma's death was a terrible blow to her, from which she never expected to recover, that she had lost everything in mother, that this angel (so she called mamma) had not forgotten her before her death, and had expressed her desire of safeguarding her future and that of Kátenka. She shed bitter tears, while telling this, and it may be that the feeling of sorrow was genuine, but it was not pure and exclusive. Lyúbochka, in a black dress, with mourning ruffles all wet with tears, drooped her head, and looked now and then at the coffin. Her face expressed childish terror. Kátenka stood near her mother and, in spite of her drawn face, was as rosy as usual. Volódya's open nature was also open in its grief; he either stood lost in thought, his immovable look directed to some object, or his mouth suddenly began to twitch, and he hurriedly made the signs of the cross and bowed. All the outsiders who attended the funeral were unbearable to me. The consoling words which they spoke to father — that she would be better there, that she was not for this world — provoked a certain anger in me.

What right did they have to speak of and weep for her? Some of them, speaking of us, called us orphans. As if we did not know ourselves that children who had no mother were called by that name! They seemed to take delight in being the first to name us so, just as people are in a hurry to call a newly married girl *Madame*.

In the farther corner of the parlour, almost hidden behind the open door of the buffet, knelt the bent, gray-haired old woman. Folding her hands and raising them to heaven, she did not weep, but prayed. Her soul went out to God, and she asked Him to unite her with the mistress whom she had loved more than any one in the world, and she was firmly convinced that this would soon happen.

"Here is one who has loved her sincerely!" thought I, and I was ashamed of myself.

The mass was over; the face of the deceased one was uncovered, and all persons present, except us, went up to the coffin, one after another, and made their obeisance.

One of the last to walk up to take leave of mother was a peasant woman, with a pretty five-year-old girl in her arms, whom, God knows why, she had brought with her. Just then I accidentally dropped my wet handkerchief, and I was on the point of lifting it up. The moment I bent down, I was struck by a terrible, penetrating cry, which was filled with such terror that if I were to live a hundred years I shall not forget it, and whenever I think of it, a cold chill passes over my body. I raised my head: on a tabouret, near the coffin, stood the same peasant woman, with difficulty restraining the girl in her arms, who fought with her little hands, and, throwing back her terrified face and fixing her bulging eyes upon the countenance of the dead woman, shrieked in a terrible, preternatural voice. I cried out in a voice which, I think, was even more terrible than the one that had struck me, and ran out of the room.

Only then I understood what the strong and heavy odour came from, which filled the room, mingling with the odour of incense; and the thought that the face which only a few days before was beaming with beauty and gentleness, the face of her I loved more than anything else in the world, could evoke terror, for the first time, it seemed, opened the bitter truth to me, and filled my soul with despair.

XXVIII.

THE LAST SAD MEMORIES

MAMMA was no more, but our life ran in the usual routine; we went to bed and rose at the same hours, and in the same rooms. Morning and evening, tea, dinner, supper, — everything was at the customary hours. The tables and chairs stood in the same places. Nothing in the house nor in our manner of life had changed, — only she was no more —

It seemed to me that after such a misfortune everything ought to change. Our usual manner of life appeared to me as an insult to her memory, and too vividly reminded me of her absence.

On the day before the funeral, after dinner, I was sleepy, and I went to the room of Natálya Sávishna, intending to lie down on her soft feather bed, under her warm quilt. When I entered, Natálya Sávishna was lying on her bed, and no doubt was sleeping. When she heard the sound of my footsteps, she raised herself, threw back the woollen kerchief with which her head was covered to protect it against flies, and, fixing her cap, seated herself on the edge of her bed.

As it used to happen frequently that after dinner I came to rest in her room, she guessed the cause of my coming, and said to me, rising from her bed:

"You have come to rest yourself, my little dove? Lie down!"

"Don't say that, Natálya Sávishna!" I said, holding her back by her hand. "I did not come for that — I just came so — and you are tired: you had better lie down yourself."

"No, my dear one, I have slept enough," she said to me (I knew she had not slept for three days). "And this is no time for sleeping," she added, with a deep sigh.

I wanted to have a talk with Natálya Sávishna about our misfortune. I knew her loyalty and love, and so it would have been a consolation for me to weep with her.

"Natálya Sávishna," I said, after a moment's silence, and seating myself on the bed, "did you expect this?"

The old woman looked at me in perplexity and with curiosity, as if she did not quite understand why I asked her that.

"Who could have expected this?" I repeated.

"Oh, my dear one," she said, casting a look of the tenderest compassion upon me, "I not only did not expect it, but I can't even think of it. It has long been time for me, an old woman, to put my old bones to rest; for see what I have lived to go through: I have buried the old master, your grandfather, — may his memory be eternal, — Prince Nikoláy Mikháylovich, two brothers, sister Annushka, and they were all younger than I, my dear one, and now I have to outlive her, no doubt for my sins. His holy will be done! He has taken her because she was worthy, and He needs good people even there."

This simple thought gave me consolation, and I moved up to Natálya Sávishna. She crossed her arms over her breast, and looked up to the ceiling; her moist, sunken eyes expressed a great, but calm, sorrow. She was firmly convinced that God would not separate her long from her upon whom all the power of her love had been centred for so many years.

"Yes, my dear one, it does not seem long since I was swathing and watching her, and she called me Násha.

She used to run up to me, and embrace me with her tiny arms, and kiss me, and say:

"'Náshik mine, beauty mine, darling mine.' And I, joking her, would say:

"'It is not so, motherkin, you do not love me! Just let you grow up, and you will marry, and will forget your Násha.' And she would fall to musing: 'No,' she'd say, 'I had better not marry, if I can't take Násha with me. I will never abandon Násha.' And there! she has abandoned me, she did not wait my time. And she did love me; but, to tell the truth, whom did she not love? Yes, my dear one, you must not forget your mother; she was not human, but an angel of heaven. When her soul will be in the heavenly kingdom, she will love you there, too, and she will rejoice in you there."

"Why do you say, Natálya Sávishna, when she will be in the heavenly kingdom?" asked I. "I think she must be there now."

"No, my dear one," said Natálya Sávishna, dropping her head, and seating herself nearer to me on the bed, "now her soul is here."

And she pointed upwards. She spoke almost in a whisper, and with such feeling and conviction that I involuntarily raised my eyes, and, looking at the moulding, tried to find something there.

"Before the soul of a righteous person goes to heaven, it has to pass through forty ordeals, my dear one, for forty days, and may still be in her house—"

She long spoke in the same strain, and she spoke with simplicity and conviction, as if she were telling the commonest things which she had seen herself, and in regard to which no one could have the slightest doubts. I listened to her, with bated breath, and though I did not understand well what she was telling me, I believed her fully.

"Yes, my dear one, now she is here, is looking at you,

and, maybe, hearing what we are saying," concluded Natálya Sávishna.

And, lowering her head, she grew silent. She needed a handkerchief to wipe off her falling tears. She rose, looked straight into my face, and said in a voice quivering with emotion:

"The Lord has moved me up several steps by this experience. What is left for me here? For whom am I to live, whom am I to love?"

"Do you not love us?" I said, with reproach, and with difficulty restraining my tears.

"God knows how I love you, my little doves, but I have never loved, nor can love, any one as I have loved her."

She could not speak any longer, turned away from me, and sobbed out loud.

I did not think of sleeping after that. We sat silent, facing each other, and wept.

Fóka entered the room. Noticing our condition, and evidently not wishing to disturb us, he looked about silently and timidly, and stopped at the door.

"What is it, Fókasha?" asked Natálya Sávishna, wiping her tears with her handkerchief.

"A pound and a half of raisins, four pounds of sugar, and three pounds of rice for the kutyá."[1]

"Right away, right away, my friend," said Natálya Sávishna. She hurriedly took a pinch of snuff, and with rapid steps went to one of the coffers. The last traces of the sorrow which had been produced by our conversation disappeared the moment she had a duty to perform which she regarded as very important.

"Why four pounds?" she grumbled, as she fetched the sugar and weighed it out on the steelyard. "Three pounds and a half will be enough."

[1] Rice-cake used in the church during the reading of the mass for the dead.

And she took a few pieces off the scale.

"And what kind of a business is this? Yesterday I let you have eight pounds of rice, and now you are asking again for some. You may do as you please, Fóka, but I will not give you any rice. That Vánka is glad there is a disturbance in the house, and so he thinks that, perhaps, I shall not notice it. No, I will not be indulgent when it comes to the master's property. Who has ever heard such a thing? Eight pounds!"

"What is to be done? He says it has all been used up."

"Well, here it is, take it! Let him have it!"

I was struck by that transition from the touching emotion with which she had been speaking to me, to grumbling and petty considerations. When I reflected over it at a later time, I understood that, in spite of what was going on in her soul, she had sufficient presence of mind to do her work, and the power of habit drew her to her ordinary occupations. The sorrow had affected her so powerfully, that she did not find it necessary to conceal the fact that she was able to attend to other matters; she would have found it difficult to understand how such a thought could come to one.

Vanity is a sentiment that is incompatible with true sorrow, and yet that sentiment is so firmly inoculated in the nature of man that the deepest sorrow rarely expels it. Vanity in sorrow is expressed by the desire to appear bereaved, or unhappy, or firm. And these low desires, to which we do not own up, but which do not abandon us, not even in the deepest grief, deprive it of power, dignity, and sincerity. But Natálya Sávishna was so deeply struck by her misfortune that in her soul not a wish was left, and she lived only from habit.

After having supplied Fóka with the desired provisions, and reminded him of the cake which was to be made for the entertainment of the clergy, she dismissed

him, took up a stocking, and again sat down by my side.

Our conversation reverted to the same subject, and we once more began to weep, and to wipe off our tears.

The conversations with Natálya Sávishna were repeated every day. Her quiet tears and gentle, pious speeches afforded me consolation and relief.

But soon we were separated; three days after the funeral we moved with our whole household to Moscow, and it was my fate never to see her again.

Grandmother received the terrible news only upon our arrival, and her grief was very great. We were not admitted to her, because she was unconscious for a whole week; the doctors were afraid for her life, the more so since she not only would not take any medicine, but did not even speak to any one, nor sleep, nor take any food. At times, while she was sitting all alone in her room, she suddenly burst out laughing, then sobbed without tears, went into convulsions, and shouted meaningless and terrible words in a preternatural voice. This was the first great sorrow which had struck her down, and it brought her to despair. She felt she must accuse somebody of her misfortune, and she uttered fearful threats, exhibiting meanwhile unusual bodily strength, jumped up from her chair, walked across the room with long, rapid steps, and then fell down unconscious.

I once walked into her room: she sat, as usual, in her chair, and was, apparently, calm; but her glance appalled me. Her eyes were wide open, but her vision was indefinite and dull: she looked straight at me, and in all probability did not see me. Her lips slowly began to smile, and she spoke in a touching and tender voice: "Come to me, my dear, come to me, my angel!" I thought she was speaking to me, so I walked up to her, but she was not looking at me. "Ah, if you knew, my treasure, how I have suffered, and how happy I am now that you

have arrived." I understood that she imagined she saw mamma, and I stopped. "And they told me that you were no more," she continued, frowning. "What nonsense! You can't die before me!" and she laughed out with a terrible, hysterical laughter.

Only people who are capable of strong affection can experience deep sorrow; but this very necessity of loving serves for them as a counteraction of their sorrow, and cures it. For this reason the moral nature of man is even more tenacious than his physical nature. Sorrow never kills.

A week later grandmother was able to weep, and she grew better. Her first thought, after she regained consciousness, was of us, and her love for us was increased. We did not leave her chair; she wept softly, spoke of mamma, and tenderly petted us.

It would never have occurred to a person who saw grandmother's bereavement, that she exaggerated it, though the expression of that sorrow was vehement and touching; but somehow I sympathized more with Natálya Sávishna, and I am convinced, even now, that nobody loved mamma so sincerely and purely, or grieved for her so much as did that simple-hearted and loving creature.

With my mother's death the happy period of my life was over, and a new epoch, that of my boyhood, began; but since the memories of Natálya Sávishna, whom I never saw again, and who had had such a strong and helpful influence upon the direction and development of my sentiments, belong to the first epoch, I shall say a few words about her and her death.

After our departure, as our people who remained in the village later told me, she felt very lonely for want of work. Although all the coffers were still in her keeping, and she did not cease rummaging through them, transposing, hanging things up, and spreading them out,

she missed the noise and bustle of the country residence when it is inhabited by its masters, to which she had been accustomed from her childhood. The bereavement, the changed manner of life, and the absence of petty cares soon developed in her an ailment of old age for which she had a natural predisposition. Precisely a year after mother's death, she developed dropsy, and took to her bed.

I think it was hard for Natálya Sávishna to live alone, and harder still to die alone, in the large Petróvskoe house, without relatives, without friends. Everybody in the house loved and respected her, but she had no friendship for anybody, and she prided herself on the fact. She surmised that in her capacity of stewardess, where she enjoyed the confidence of her masters and had so many coffers with all kinds of property in her charge, her friendship for anybody would necessarily lead to hypocrisy and criminal condescension. For this reason, or, perhaps, because she had nothing in common with the other servants, she kept aloof from all and maintained that in the house she had no kith nor kin, and that she would show no indulgence in matters pertaining to her master's property.

She sought and found consolation in confiding her feelings to God in fervent prayers; but at times, during moments of weakness, to which we all are subject, when the best consolation is afforded man by the tears and sympathies of living beings, she lifted upon her bed her lapdog, who, fixing her yellow eyes upon her, licked her hands; Natálya Sávishna spoke to her and, weeping softly, stroked her. When her lapdog began pitifully to whimper, she tried to quiet her, and said: "Now stop, I know without you that I shall die soon."

A month before her death she took some white calico, white muslin, and rose-coloured ribbons out of her coffer: with the aid of her servant-girl she sewed a white dress

and a cap for herself, and made the minutest arrangements for everything that would be needed for her funeral. She also went through the coffers of her master, and transferred everything, with the greatest precision, according to an invoice, to the wife of the business steward; then she took out two silk dresses and an ancient shawl, which had been given her at one time by grandmother, and grandfather's military uniform, with golden trappings, which had also been given into her full possession. Thanks to her care, the seams and the lace of the uniform were still fresh, and the cloth had not been touched by moths. Before her death she expressed her wish that one of the dresses — the rose-coloured one — should be given to Volódya for a dressing-gown or smoking-jacket, the other, — puce in checks; — to me, for similar use, and the shawl to Lyúbochka. The uniform she bequeathed to whichever of us became an officer first. The rest of her property and money, except forty roubles which she laid aside for her burial and mass, she left to her brother. Her brother, who had long ago been emancipated, was living in some distant Government, and leading a most riotous life, so she had no relations with him during her lifetime.

When Natálya Sávishna's brother appeared to get his inheritance, and the whole property of the deceased woman amounted only to twenty-five roubles, he was unwilling to believe it, and declared it was impossible that an old woman, who had lived for sixty years in a rich house, who had had everything in her hands, and all her life lived parsimoniously and quarrelled about every rag, should have left nothing. But it was really so.

Natálya Sávishna suffered two months from her disease, and bore her sufferings with truly Christian patience; she did not grumble, did not complain, but only, as was her custom, continually invoked God. An

hour before death, she confessed with quiet joy, and received the holy sacrament and extreme unction.

She begged forgiveness of the inmates of the house for offences which she might have caused them, and asked her confessor, Father Vasíli, to transmit to us that she did not know how to thank us for our kindnesses, and that she asked us to forgive her, if through her stupidity she had offended any one, but that "I have never been a thief, and have never so much as filched a thread from my masters." This was the one quality for which she valued herself.

Having donned the gown which she had prepared, and a cap, and resting on her pillows, she continued talking to the priest to the very last. She happened to think that she had left nothing for the poor, so she took out ten roubles, and asked him to distribute them among the poor of his parish; then she made the sign of the cross, lay down, and drew her last sigh, pronouncing the name of God with a joyful smile.

She left life without regret, was not afraid of death, and accepted it as a boon. This is often said, but how rarely does it happen in reality! Natálya Sávishna could well afford to be without fear of death, for she died with her faith unshaken, and fulfilling the law of the gospel. All her life was a pure, unselfish love and self-sacrifice.

What if her belief might have been more elevated, and her life directed to higher purposes, — was her pure soul on that account less worthy of love and admiration?

She executed the best and highest act of this life, — she died without regrets or fear.

She was buried, according to her own wish, not far from the chapel which was built over mother's grave. The mound under which she lies, and which is overgrown with nettles and agrimony, is surrounded by a black

picket-fence, and I never fail to go from the chapel to this fence and to make a low obeisance.

At times I stop in silence between the chapel and the black fence. In my soul again arise gloomy recollections, and I think: Has Providence connected me with these two beings only that I may eternally regret them?

BOYHOOD

A Novel

1854

BOYHOOD

I.

AT EASY STAGES

AGAIN two carriages drove up to the veranda of the Petróvskoe house: one, a coach, in which seated themselves Mimi, Kátenka, Lyúbochka and a chambermaid, and steward Yákov himself, on the box; another, a calash, in which Volódya and I, and lackey Vasíli, who had but lately been taken from field labour, were to travel.

Papa, who was to follow us to Moscow a few days later, stood on the veranda without his cap, and made the sign of the cross against the window of the coach, and at the calash.

"Well, Christ be with you! Move on!" Yákov and the coachmen (we were travelling in our own carriages) doffed their caps and made the sign of the cross. "Move on! Godspeed!"

The bodies of the carriages began to leap up and down on the uneven road, and the birches of the highway flew by us, one after another. I did not feel sad in the least: my mental vision was turned not to what I left behind me, but to what was ahead of me. The farther I departed from the objects that were connected with sad memories, which until then had filled my imagination,

the more these memories faded, and were soon exchanged for the joyous consciousness of a life full of strength, freshness, and hope.

I have rarely passed a few days, I shall not say as merrily, for I felt as yet ashamed to abandon myself to merriment, — but as agreeably, as well, as the four days of our journey. Before my eyes was neither the locked door of mother's chamber, by which I could not pass without a shudder, nor the closed piano, which not only was not opened, but was looked upon with a certain terror, nor the mourning garments (we were all dressed in simple travelling costumes), nor any other of the many things which reminded me of my irretrievable loss and caused me to beware of every manifestation of life that in any manner could offend *her* memory. Here, on the contrary, the ever new, picturesque places and objects arrested and diverted my attention, and vernal nature peopled my soul with balmy feelings of satisfaction with the present, and with bright hope for the future.

Early, very early in the morning, heartless and, as is always the case with men in their new duties, overzealous, Vasíli pulled off my coverlet and assured me that it was time to travel, and that everything was ready. However much I squirmed, and pretended, and growled, to get at least another quarter of an hour for my sweet morning sleep, I could see by Vasíli's firm face that he was inexorable, and would pull off my coverlet another twenty times; so I jumped up and ran into the courtyard to get washed.

In the hall was already boiling the samovár, which outrider Mítka, turning red like a lobster, was fanning with his breath. The air was damp and misty, just as when steam rises from a strong-smelling dunghill. The sun with its bright, merry light illuminated the eastern part of the heavens and the straw thatches of the spacious sheds around the courtyard, the straw gleaming from the dew

that covered it. Beneath the sheds could be seen our horses, tied to the manger, and could be heard their measured chewing. A shaggy black dog, who had cuddled up before dawn on a dry head of manure, lazily stretched himself and, wagging his tail, betook himself at a jogging pace to the other side of the yard. The industrious housewife opened the creaking gates, and drove the pensive cows into the street, where were already heard the tramp and lowing and bleating of the cattle, and exchanged a word or two with her sleepy neighbour. Filípp, with his shirt-sleeves rolled up, drew the bucket from the deep well by turning the wheel, and, splashing the clear water, poured it into the oaken trough, near which the wakeful ducks were plashing in a puddle; and I looked with pleasure at Filípp's large face with its expansive beard, and at his swollen veins and muscles, which were sharply defined on his powerful bare arms, whenever he exerted himself at work.

They were stirring behind the partition, where Mimi slept with the girls, and through which we had carried on a conversation in the evening; Másha ran by us ever more frequently, carrying various objects which she tried to conceal with a cloth from our curiosity. Finally the door was opened, and we were called to drink tea.

Vasíli kept on running into the room, in a fit of superfluous zeal, carried away, now one thing, now another, beckoned to us, and persistently implored Márya Ivánovna to make an early start. The horses were hitched up, and expressed their impatience by tinkling their bells from time to time. The portmanteaus, coffers, cases, and boxes were again put in their places, and we took our seats. But every time we seated ourselves in the calash, we found a mountain instead of a seat, so that we never could understand how it had all been properly packed away the day before, and how we were going to sit down. In particular a walnut tea-box with a three-cornered lid,

which they had placed in our calash, provoked my greatest anger. But Vasílĭ said that it would all settle after awhile, and I was compelled to believe him.

The sun had just risen from under a dense white cloud which had covered the east, and the whole surrounding country was merged in a soft, soothing light. Everything around me was beautiful, and my soul felt light and calm. The road wound in front of us like a broad ribbon, among fields of dried-up stubble and verdure agleam with dew. Here and there along the road we came across a gloomy willow or a young birch-tree with small, viscous leaves, which threw its long, immovable shadow across the dry, clayey ruts and the small, green grass of the road. The monotonous rumble of the wheels and tinkling of the bells did not drown the song of the skylarks which circled near the very road. The odour of moth-eaten cloth, of the dust, or of some acid, which characterized our calash, was overcome by the fragrance of morning, and I felt in my soul a pleasurable unrest, a desire to do something, — which is a sign of genuine enjoyment.

I had not had any time to say my prayers at the tavern: but having frequently observed that some misfortune always befell me on days when I, for some reason or other, forgot to carry out this ceremony, I tried to correct my omission: I doffed my cap, turned to one side of the calash, said my prayers, and made the signs of the cross under my blouse, so that no one should see them. But a thousand different objects distracted my attention, and I absent-mindedly repeated several times in succession the same words of my prayer.

Some figures were seen to move on the foot-path which wound along the road: those were women making their pilgrimage. Their heads were wrapped in soiled kerchiefs; on their backs they carried bast knapsacks; their feet were covered with dirty, torn rag stockings and heavy

bast sandals. They moved onward in single file, with slow and heavy steps, moving their staffs in even measure, and barely casting a glance upon us. I was long busy with the question, whither they went, and wherefore, — whether their wandering would last a considerable time and how soon it would be before their long shadows, which they cast upon the road, would merge with the shadow of the willow, which they had to pass.

Then a four-horse post-carriage rapidly bore down upon us. Two seconds more, and the faces, which, at the distance of five feet, had cast a glance of curiosity and greeting upon us, flashed by us, and it seemed strange to me that these faces had nothing in common with me, and that I should, probably, never see them again.

Along one side of the road ran two sweating, shaggy horses with their collars and their traces tucked under their harness. The driver, a young fellow, with his lamb-skin cap poised on one ear, hung his long legs in large boots astride a horse, whose yoke rested loosely upon its neck, so that the bell tinkled but rarely and inaudibly, and he sang a drawling song. His countenance and attitude expressed so much indolent, careless satisfaction, that it seemed to me the acme of happiness to be a driver, to ride on return horses, and sing melancholy songs.

There, far beyond the ravine, a village church with a green roof was outlined against the light-blue sky; there, appeared the village itself, the red roof of the manor, and a green garden. Who was living in that house? Were there any children, a father, a mother, a teacher in it? Why could we not drive up to the house, and become acquainted with its proprietors? There, was a long caravan of immense wagons, each of which was drawn by three well-fed, stout-legged horses, and we were compelled to drive far to one side, to get beyond them.

"What are you hauling?" asked Vasíli of the first driver, who, dangling his huge legs over the foot-rest and

waving his whip, kept on staring at us meaninglessly, and gave us an answer only when it was not possible to hear him.

"What goods are these?" Vasíli turned to another wagon, in the fenced-off front part of which the driver lay under a new mat. A blond head with a red face and russet beard for a moment stuck out from the mat, with an indifferent, contemptuous look gazed at our calash, and again hid itself. It occurred to me that the drivers could not make out who we were, and whither and whence we were travelling.

For an hour and a half I was absorbed in various observations, and paid no attention to the crooked figures on the verst-posts. But now the sun began to glow more warmly upon my head and back, the road grew more dusty, the three-cornered lid of the tea-box annoyed me more and more, and I several times changed my position: I felt warm, uncomfortable, and tired. All my attention was turned to the verst-posts and the figures upon them. I made all kinds of mathematical calculations in regard to the time when we should arrive at the station. "Twelve versts are one third of thirty-six, and to Líptsy is forty-one versts, consequently we have travelled one third, and how much?" and so forth.

"Vasíli," said I, when I noticed that he was beginning to nod on his box, "let me sit on the box, my dear!"

Vasíli consented. We exchanged places: he immediately started to snore, and so spread himself in the calash that no place was left for anybody else; while from the height which I occupied, a very pleasing picture was unravelled before me, namely our four horses, Neruchínskaya, Sexton, Left Shaft, and Apothecary, whose properties I had studied to the minutest details and shades.

"Why is Sexton to-day on the off side, and not on the nigh side, Filípp?" I asked him somewhat timidly.

"Sexton?"

"And Neruchínskaya is not pulling at all," said I.

"Sexton can't be put on the nigh side," said Filípp, without paying any attention to my last remark. "She is not the kind of a horse to be put on the nigh side. On the nigh side you need a horse which, in short, *is* a horse, and not this kind of a horse."

Saying this, Filípp bent down to the right, and, pulling the reins with all his might, began, in a peculiar upward manner, to strike Sexton's tail and legs; and though Sexton was doing her best and drawing the whole calash, Filípp did not put a stop to his manœuvre except when he felt the necessity for resting and, for some reason, pushing his cap down on one side, though it was firmly and correctly poised upon his head.

I took advantage of such a happy moment, and asked Filípp to let me do the driving. Filípp gave me at first one line, then another; finally all six lines and the whip passed into my hands, and I was completely happy. I tried in every way to imitate Filípp, and asked him whether I was doing right, but it generally ended by his being dissatisfied with me: he said that one was drawing too much, and another was not drawing at all, and finally he stuck his elbow in front of me, and took the lines away.

The heat was increasing, and the cirrus clouds swelled like soap-bubbles, higher and higher, and came together and assumed dark gray shades. A hand with a bottle and a bundle was thrust out of the window of the coach. Vasíli, with remarkable agility, leaped from the box, while the calash was in motion, and brought us cheese-cakes and kvas.

When we reached the incline of a steep hill, we all alighted from our carriages, and sometimes we ran a race down to the bridge, while Vasíli and Yákov put the brakes to the wheels and from both sides supported the coach

with their hands, as if they could prevent it from falling. Then, with Mimi's permission, Volódya or I took a seat in the coach, and Lyúbochka or Kátenka seated themselves in the calash. These exchanges gave the girls great pleasure, because they justly discovered that it was much jollier in the calash. At times, when we crossed a grove during the heat, we fell behind the coach, gathered green branches, and built an arbour in the calash. The transportable arbour caught up with the coach, at full speed, while Lyúbochka screamed at the top of her voice, which she never failed to do at any occasion that gave her much pleasure.

At last, there was the village where we were to dine and rest. There were the smells of the village, — the smoke, the tar, and the sheepskins, and we heard the sound of conversation, the tramp of steps, and the rattle of wheels. The carriage bells no longer sounded as in the open field, and on both sides cabins flew by with their straw thatches, carved frame porches, and tiny windows, with red and green shutters, through which here and there stuck out the head of a curious woman. Here were the village boys and girls in shirts only: opening wide their eyes, and extending their arms, they stood stock-still, or, tripping with their bare feet in the dust, ran, in spite of the threatening motions of Filípp, after the carriages and endeavoured to climb on the portmanteaus which were tied behind. Now, red-haired tavern-keepers came running to the carriages on both sides, and with enticing words and gestures vied in the effort to attract the travellers. "Whoa!" the gate creaked, the catch held it in place, and we drove into the courtyard. Four hours of rest and freedom!

II.

THE STORM

THE sun inclined to the west, and with its hot rays unbearably burnt my neck and cheeks. It was impossible to touch the heated edges of the calash. Dense dust rose along the road and filled the air. There was not the least breeze to carry it off. In front of us, at a constant distance, shook the tall, dusty body of the coach with its baggage, and beyond it now and then could be discerned the whip which the coachman waved, and his hat and Yákov's cap. I did not know what to do with myself; neither the black, dust-covered face of Volódya, who was dozing by my side, nor the movements of Filípp's back, nor the elongated shadow of our calash, which followed us at an oblique angle, afforded me any distraction. All my attention was directed to the verst-posts, which I noticed at a distance, and to the clouds, which before were scattered over the horizon and now assumed ominous, black hues, and gathered into one gloomy storm-cloud. Now and then rumbled a far-off peal of thunder. This latter circumstance more than anything else increased my impatience to reach a tavern at the earliest possible moment. The storm induced in me an inexpressibly heavy feeling of melancholy and terror.

It was yet ten versts to the nearest village, when a dark, lilac cloud arose, God knows where, without the slightest wind, but nevertheless rapidly moved up toward us. The sun, not yet overcast, brightly illuminated its

sombre form and the gray streaks which ran down from it to the horizon. At times lightning flashed in the distance, and I heard a weak din, which by degrees grew louder, came nearer, and passed into uninterrupted peals that resounded through the whole heavens. Vasíli rose from his seat and raised the top of the calash; the coachmen put on their sleeveless coats, and at every thunderclap doffed their caps, and made the sign of the cross; the horses pricked up their ears, expanded their nostrils, as if to sniff the fresh air which was borne from the approaching storm-cloud, and the calash ran faster over the dusty road.

I was ill at ease, and felt my blood coursing faster in my veins. Now the foremost clouds began to shroud the sun; now it peeped out for the last time, lighted up the terribly gloomy side of the horizon, and disappeared. The whole country was suddenly changed and assumed a sombre aspect. Here, an aspen grove began to quiver; its leaves turned turbidly white, brightly outlined against the lilac background of the cloud, and they rustled and whirled about. The tops of tall birches began to sway, and tufts of dry grass flew across the road. Sand-martins and white-breasted swallows flitted all about the calash, as if wishing to stop it, and flew by the very breasts of the horses; jackdaws, with their disarranged wings, flew somehow sideways along the wind. The corners of the leather boot, which we had pinned over us, commenced to rise, letting in streams of moist wind, and, flapping, struck the body of the calash. Lightning flashed, in the very calash it seemed, blinded our eyes, and for an instant lighted up the gray cloth, the tasselled border, and Volódya's figure crouching in a corner. At the same moment a majestic peal was heard over our heads, and it rose higher and higher, wider and wider, on an immense spiral, increased in strength, and passed into a deafening roar, which made me tremble against my will, and hold

my breath. God's anger! How much poetry there is in this popular conception!

The wheels revolved faster and faster; I could see by the backs of Vasíli and Filípp, who impatiently waved his whip, that they, too, were afraid. The calash rapidly descended a hill, and rattled over a board bridge; I was afraid to move, and every minute expected our common destruction.

"Whoa!" the trace-leather was torn, and we were compelled to stop, in spite of the uninterrupted, deafening peals.

Leaning my head against the edge of the calash, I followed, in breathless expectancy, and against hope, the movements of the fat, black fingers of Filípp, who leisurely tied a knot and straightened out the traces, all the time striking the off horse with the palm of his hand and with the whip handle.

Agitated feelings of melancholy and terror grew apace in me with the storm, but when the majestic moment of silence came, which generally preceded the burst of storm, these feelings were so intensified that, if this condition had lasted another fifteen minutes, I should have died of excitement. Just then there issued from underneath the bridge a human being, having on nothing but a dirty, ragged shirt, with a swollen, meaningless countenance, a shaking, close-cropped bare head, crooked, fleshless legs, and a shining, red stump of a hand which he thrust straight into the calash.

"Good people! Give, for Christ's sake, to the poor man!" resounded his ailing voice, and the beggar made the sign of the cross with each word, and bowed low to the ground.

I cannot express the sensation of cold terror which at that moment took possession of my soul. A chill ran through my hair, and my eyes were directed to the beggar with a blank stare of terror.

Vasíli handed the beggar some alms and instructed Filípp in regard to the fastening of the trace-leather, and when all was done, Filípp gathered up his lines, climbed on his box, and began to fetch something out of his side pocket. No sooner did we start, than a blinding flash of lightning, which for a moment filled the ravine with a sheet of fiery light, compelled the horses to stop; without the slightest interval, it was accompanied by such a deafening crack of thunder that it seemed the whole vault of heaven would cave in upon us. The wind grew stronger; the manes and tails of the horses, Vasíli's cloak and the edges of the boot took the same direction, and desperately flapped in the gusts of the furious wind. A large drop of rain fell upon the leather top of the calash; then another, a third, a fourth, and suddenly it sounded as if some one had started drumming over our heads, and the whole country resounded with the even pattering of the falling rain. By the movement of Vasíli's elbow I could tell that he was untying his purse; the beggar continued making the signs of the cross and the low obeisances, and ran along so near the very wheels that I thought he would be run over. "Give, for Christ's sake!" Finally a copper coin flew past us, and the pitiful creature, whose dripping wet shirt closely fitted his lean body, swaying in the wind, stopped perplexed in the middle of the road, and disappeared from my sight.

The slanting rain was driven by the wind, and fell as from a bucket; streams ran down Vasíli's frieze back and into a puddle of turbid water, which had formed itself on the boot. The dust, gathering up in globular form, was changed into liquid mud, which was kneaded by the turning wheels. The jolts of the carriage became less frequent, and streams of turbid water ran along the clayey ruts. The lightning flashed over a greater space and was paler, and the bursts of thunder were not so striking in the even patter of the rain.

Then the rain fell in smaller drops; the storm-cloud broke up into billowy cloudlets, and began to grow brighter there where the sun ought to have been, and through the grayish-white edges of the cloud a patch of pure azure was barely visible. A minute later, a timid sunbeam glistened in the puddles of the road, upon strips of drizzling rain that fell as through a sieve, and upon the bright, rain-washed verdure along the highway. A black cloud just as threateningly shrouded the opposite side of the horizon, but I no longer was afraid of it. I experienced an inexpressibly joyful sensation of the hope of life, which rapidly took the place in me of the heavy feeling of terror. My soul was as smiling as the refreshed and gladsome Nature.

Vasíli threw back the collar of his cloak, took off his cap and shook it; Volódya threw back the boot; I put my head out of the calash, and eagerly breathed the fresh, aromatic air. The bright, washed body of the coach with its portmanteaus and boxes swayed in front of us; the backs of the horses, the harness, the lines, the tires, — everything was wet and glistened in the sun, as if it were freshly varnished.

On one side of the road was a boundless field of winter grain, which was here and there intercepted by shallow hollows; it gleamed with its wet earth and verdure, and spread its shady carpet to the very horizon. On the other side was an aspen grove, overgrown with hazel and black alder bushes; it stood as though in a superabundance of happiness, without stirring, and slowly shed bright drops of rain from its clean-washed branches on the dry last year's leaves below. On all sides crested skylarks circled with their merry songs, or rapidly swooped down; in the wet bushes could be heard the busy movements of tiny birds, and from the middle of the grove resounded the voice of the cuckoo.

So bewitching to me was the exquisite fragrance of

the forest after a vernal storm, — the sweet odour of the birches, the violets, the sere leaves, the clavarias, and the bird-cherry, that I was not able to stay in the calash, leaped down from the carriage step, ran into the bushes and, paying no attention to the rain-drops that showered down upon me, broke off some wet branches of budding bird-cherry, and struck my face with it, intoxicating myself with its exquisite aroma. I did not even pay any attention to the fact that immense clods of dirt were sticking to my boots, and that my stockings were quite wet, but, plashing through the mud, ran to the window of the coach.

"Lyúbochka! Kátenka!" I cried, giving them a few branches of bird-cherry. "Just see, how nice it is!"

The girls screamed and went into ecstasies, and Mimi cried that I should go away, or I would be run over.

"Just smell it, how nice it is!" I cried.

III.

A NEW VIEW

KÁTENKA sat near me in the calash and, inclining her pretty head, pensively followed the dusty road which retreated under the wheels. I looked at her in silence, and I was surprised at the unchildlike, sad expression which I had observed for the first time upon her rosy face.

"Now, we shall soon be in Moscow," I said. "What do you think of Moscow?"

"I do not know," she answered, unwillingly.

"Anyway, what do you think? Is it larger than Serpukhóv, or not?"

"What?"

"Oh, nothing."

But, with the instinctive feeling, with which one guesses the thoughts of another, and which serves as the guiding thread to a conversation, Kátenka understood that her indifference pained me. She raised her head, and turned toward me.

"Papa told you that we are to live at grandmother's?"

"He did. Grandmother wants us all to live together."

"And we shall all live there?"

"Of course. We shall live up-stairs, occupying one half, you the other, and papa the wing; but we shall eat together down-stairs, with grandmother."

"Mamma says that grandmother is such a serious woman, and has such a quick temper."

"N-no! That seems so only at first. She is serious, but not impatient; on the contrary, she is good and jolly. You ought to have seen what a party there was upon her name day!"

"Still, I am afraid of her; and, besides, God knows whether we shall —"

Kátenka suddenly grew silent, and again fell to musing.

"Wha-at?" I asked in agitation.

"Nothing, I just was thinking."

"No, you said: 'God knows.'"

"So you said that you had a party at grandmother's."

"Yes, it is a pity you were not there. There were a lot of people, — a thousand people, — music, and generals, and I danced. Kátenka!" I suddenly said, stopping in the middle of my description, "you are not listening!"

"Yes, I am; you said that you were dancing."

"Why are you so sad?"

"One can't always be merry."

"No, you have changed a great deal since we came back from Moscow. Tell me truly," I added with a firm glance, turning toward her, "why have you become so strange?"

"Am I?" Kátenka answered with animation, which proved that my remark interested her. "I am not strange at all."

"No, you are not the same you used to be," I continued. "Formerly it was evident that you were one with us in everything, that you regarded us as your relatives and loved us as we love you; but now you have become so solemn, and you keep away from us —"

"Not at all!"

"No, let me finish," I interrupted her, as I began to feel a light tickling in my nose, which preceded the tears that always stood in my eyes when I expressed a long repressed secret thought. "You keep away from us, and

talk only with Mimi, as though you did not wish to know us."

"A person can't always be one and the same; one has to change sometime," answered Kátenka, who was in the habit of explaining everything by a certain fatalistic necessity, whenever she did not know what to say.

I recalled how once, when she had quarrelled with Lyúbochka, who had called her a "silly girl," she had answered: "Not everybody can be clever, somebody has to be silly," but I was not satisfied with the answer that one has to change sometime, so I continued my inquiry:

"But why must one?"

"We shall not be living together all the time," Kátenka answered, lightly blushing and looking fixedly at Filípp's back. "Mamma was able to stay at the house of your mother, who was her friend; but it is yet a question whether she will be able to get along with the countess, who, they say, is such an irritable woman. And, besides, we shall have to part sometime: you are rich, — you have the Petróvskoe estate, and we are poor, — mamma has nothing."

"You are rich, we are poor," these words and the conceptions which were connected with them appeared uncommonly strange to me. According to the ideas which I then had, only beggars and peasants could be poor, and I in no way was able in my imagination to connect this idea of poverty with graceful, pretty Kátenka. It seemed to me that Mimi and Kátenka, who had always lived with us, would remain with us for ever, and that everything would be divided equally. It could not be otherwise. Now, a thousand new, indistinct ideas in regard to their lonely condition nestled in my brain, and I felt so ashamed that we were rich, and they poor, that I blushed and could not take courage to look up into Kátenka's face.

"What of it, if we are rich, and they poor?" I thought,

"and how does the necessity for our separation follow from it? Why can't we divide equally what we have?" But I understood that it was not proper to speak with Kátenka about it, and a certain practical instinct told me, in opposition to my logical observations, that she was right, and that it would be out of place to explain my thought to her.

"You really mean to leave us?" I said; "but how are we going to live separately?"

"What is to be done? I am sorry myself. Only, when this happens, I know what I shall do —"

"You will become an actress! What nonsense!" I interrupted her, for I knew that it was her favourite dream to become an actress.

"No, I used to say that when I was little."

"Then, what are you going to do?"

"I will go to a monastery to live, and I will wear a black dress and a velvet bonnet."

Kátenka burst out weeping.

My reader, have you ever happened to notice at a certain stage of your life, how your view of things completely changed, as though all the things which you used to know, heretofore, suddenly turned a different, unfamiliar side to you? Some such moral transformation took place in me for the first time, during our journey, and from this I count the beginning of my boyhood.

I obtained for the first time a clear idea of the fact that we, that is, our family, were not alone in the world, that not all interests centred about us, and that there was another life for people who had nothing in common with us, who did not care for us, and who even did not have any idea of our existence. To be sure, I knew it before; but I did not know it in the same manner as now, — I was not conscious of it, did not feel it.

A thought passes into a conviction only by one certain road, which is frequently quite unexpected and different

from the roads which other minds pass over, in order to obtain the same conviction. My conversation with Kátenka, which had touched me so powerfully, and had caused me to consider her future position, was that road for me. When I looked at the villages and towns, through which we passed, where in every house lived at least one such family as ours, at the women and children, who with a moment's curiosity gazed at the carriage, and then for ever disappeared from view, at the shopkeepers and peasants, who not only did not greet us, as I was used to being greeted at Petróvskoe, but did not even favour us with their glances, — the question for the first time troubled me, what it was that could interest them, if they did not at all care for us. And from this question originated others. What they lived by, and how? How they were educated? Whether people taught them, and let them play, and how they punished them? and so forth.

IV.

AT MOSCOW

UPON arriving at Moscow, my changed view of things and men, and my relation to them became even more perceptible.

When, at my first meeting with grandmother, I saw her thin, wrinkled face and dim eyes, my feelings of servile respect and awe, which I used to experience before her, gave way to compassion; and when she, burying her face in Lyúbochka's head, sobbed as if the body of her beloved daughter were before her eyes, my compassion was changed even into a feeling of affection. I felt ill at ease, when I saw her grief at our first meeting. I was conscious of the fact that we were nothing in her eyes in our own persons, and that we were dear to her only as a memory; I felt that in every kiss, which she showered upon my cheeks, only this thought was expressed: she is no more, she is dead, and I shall never see her again!

Papa, who in Moscow paid very little attention to us, and, with an ever worried face, came to us only for dinner, in a black coat or dress coat, together with his tall shirt collars, with his wadded morning-gown, his village elders, stewards, visits to the threshing-floor and hunts, had lost much in my eyes. Karl Iványovich, whom grandmother called "valet," and who, God knows why, had suddenly taken it into his head to exchange his respectable, familiar bald head for a red wig with a straight parting almost in the middle, appeared so odd and ridiculous to

me, that I wondered how it was I had never noticed it before.

An invisible barrier had arisen also between the girls and ourselves. We all had secrets of our own. They evidently were proud of their skirts, which were getting longer, and we were proud of our pantaloons with straps. Mimi on the first Sunday came to dinner in such a swell dress and with such ribbons upon her head, that one could see at once we were no longer in the country, and everything would go differently now.

V.

MY ELDER BROTHER

I WAS only a year and a few months younger than Volódya; we grew up, studied, and always played together. No distinction of elder and younger was made between us; but just about this time of which I am speaking, I began to understand that Volódya was not my companion either in years, inclinations, or ability. It even seemed to me that Volódya himself recognized his seniority, and was proud of it. This impression, however false it may have been, inspired me with an egoism which suffered at every conflict with him. He stood higher than I in everything: in games, in study, in disputes, in the ability to carry himself, — and all this removed me from him, and caused me to experience incomprehensible moral suffering. If, when Volódya for the first time received Dutch shirts with turned down collars, I had said straight out that I was angry because I did not have such myself, I am sure I should have felt more at ease, and should not have thought every time he fixed his collar that he was doing it only to annoy me.

I was vexed most of all by the fact that Volódya seemed to understand me but tried to conceal it.

Who has not noticed those mysterious, wordless relations which manifest themselves in a scarcely visible smile, in the motion or glance of persons who always live together, in brothers, friends, husband and wife, master and servant, especially when these people are not entirely

open to each other? How many unuttered desires, thoughts, and fears of not being understood are expressed in one casual glance, when your eyes meet timidly and with indecision!

But, it may be, my excessive sensibility and tendency for analysis deceived me in this respect; it may be, Volódya did not feel at all as I did. He was impassioned, open, and inconstant in his emotions. When he was carried away by any matter whatsoever, he gave himself up to it with his whole soul.

Suddenly he would be smitten with a passion for pictures: he immediately began to paint, bought pictures with all his pocket money, begged them of his teacher of drawing, from papa, and from grandmother; or with a passion for trifles with which to adorn his table, and which he, therefore, gathered up all over the house; or with a passion for novels, which he secretly procured and read for days and nights at a time. I was involuntarily carried away by his passions, but was too proud to follow in his footsteps, and too young and dependent to choose a road for myself. I envied nothing so much as Volódya's felicitous, noble, and open-hearted character, which was expressed with particular precision in the quarrels which arose between us. I felt that he was doing right, but I was unable to imitate him.

Once, while his passion for things was at white heat, I walked up to his table and by chance broke an empty, gaily coloured bottle.

"Who asked you to touch my things?" said Volódya, who had just entered the room and noticed the disorder which I had produced in the symmetry of the various ornaments on his table. "And where is the bottle? I am sure, you —"

"Accidentally dropped it, and it was broken. I am sorry."

"Do me the favour, and *never dare* to touch any of my

things again," he said, putting together the pieces of the broken bottle, and looking at them with deep regret.

"Please *do not command*," I answered. "I have broken it, and that is the end of it; what is the use of saying anything about it?"

And I smiled, although I did not feel in the least like smiling.

"Yes, it is nothing to you, but it is much to me," continued Volódya, shrugging his shoulder, which gesture he had inherited from papa. "You broke it, and now you laugh! What an unbearable urchin!"

"I am an urchin, and you are big and stupid."

"I do not intend having any words with you," said Volódya, lightly brushing me aside. "Get away!"

"Don't push me!"

"Get away!"

"I tell you, don't push me!"

Volódya took hold of my arm, and was about to pull me away from the table, but I was in the highest degree excited, and so I seized the leg of the table, and upset it.

"There you have it!" and all the porcelain and crystal ornaments fell to the ground with a crash.

"Disgusting urchin!" cried Volódya, trying to catch the falling objects.

"Well, now everything is ended between us," thought I, as I left the room. "We shall be enemies from now on."

We did not speak with each other until evening. I felt I was guilty, was afraid to look at him, and could not do a thing all day; Volódya, on the contrary, studied well, and, as usual, chatted and laughed with the girls after dinner.

The moment our teacher was through with our lesson, I left the room, for I felt ill at ease, awkward, and ashamed in the presence of my brother. After our evening lesson in history, I took my copy-books and started

for the door. When I passed by Volódya, I felt at heart like going to him and making up with him, but I pouted and tried to look angry. Volódya just happened to raise his head, and he looked at me with a barely noticeable, open-hearted, derisive smile. Our eyes met, and I knew that he understood me, and that he understood that I knew that he understood, but some irresistible feeling made me turn away.

"Nikólenka!" he said to me in the simplest, not in the least pathetic voice, "stop pouting. Pardon me, if I have offended you."

And he gave me his hand.

I felt as if something was rising in my throat and choking me; but that lasted only a minute; tears rolled down my eyes, and I felt better.

"For—give — me — Vol—dya!" said I, pressing his hand.

Volódya looked at me as though he could not understand why the tears were in my eyes.

VI.

MÁSHA

NOT one of the changes which had taken place, in my view of things, was so striking, so far as I myself was concerned, as the one by which I ceased to see in one of our chambermaids merely a female servant, and began to see, instead, a woman, on whom, in a certain degree, my peace and happiness might depend. As far back as I can remember myself, I remember Másha in our house, but never had I paid the slightest attention to her, before the incident had taken place which completely changed my view of her, and which I shall now relate. Másha was about twenty-five years old, when I was fourteen. She was very pretty, but I am afraid to describe her, lest my imagination should reproduce the enchanting and deceptive image which formed itself during my passion. Not to make any mistake, I shall only say that she was uncommonly white, voluptuously developed, and a woman, — and I was fourteen years old.

In one of those moments, when with lesson in hand one paces up and down the room, trying to step only on the cracks between the deals, or sings some senseless air, or smears ink over the edges of the table, or repeats some meaningless words, — in short, in one of those moments, when the mind refuses to work, and the imagination is uppermost and seeks impressions, I left the class-room and aimlessly went to the landing of the stairs.

Somebody was ascending the stairs in shoes, at the

lower turn of the staircase. Of course, I wanted to know who it was, but suddenly the noise of the steps died down, and I heard Másha's voice: "Please don't! Stop your nonsense! If Márya Ivánovna should come upon you, it would go ill with you!"

"She will not come," I heard Volódya's voice in a whisper, and right after something rustled, as if Volódya were trying to hold her back.

"Where are you putting your hand? For shame!" and Másha, with her kerchief awry on her head, displaying her full white neck, rushed by me.

I can't explain how this discovery surprised me; but the feeling of surprise soon gave way to the feeling of sympathy for Volódya's act. I did not so much marvel at his deed, as at his conclusion that it was agreeable to act thus. I involuntarily wanted to imitate him.

I often passed hours at a time upon the landing of the staircase, listening with the closest attention to the slightest movements above me; but I could never bring myself to imitate Volódya, though I wished to do that more than anything else in the world. At times I hid behind the door, and with a heavy feeling of envy and jealousy listened to the disturbance in the maids' room, and I wondered what my situation would be if I walked up-stairs and tried to kiss Másha, just as Volódya had done. What should I have said with my broad nose and towering tufts of hair, if she had asked me what I wanted there? At times I heard Másha speaking to Volódya:

"This is a true punishment! Why do you annoy me so much! Go away from here, naughty boy. Why does Nikoláy Petróvich never come here, and bother me?"

She did not know that Nikoláy Petróvich was at that moment sitting under the staircase, and that he would gladly have given everything in the world, if he could be in the place of naughty Volódya.

I was bashful by nature, and my bashfulness only increased my conviction that I was homely. I am convinced that nothing has such a telling influence upon the direction of a man's life as his looks, and not so much his looks as his conviction of their attractiveness or unattractiveness.

I was too egoistic to get used to my situation, and tried to convince myself, like the fox, that the grapes were yet too green; that is, I tried to despise all the pleasures which are brought about by a pleasant countenance, such as, in my opinion, Volódya enjoyed, and such as I envied with all my heart, and I exerted all the powers of mind and imagination to find pleasure in haughty solitude.

VII.

SHOT

"O LORD, powder!" cried out Mimi, in a voice of breathless agitation. "What are you doing? You want to burn the house, and to ruin us all —"

And Mimi ordered, with an indescribable expression of fortitude, all persons present to step aside, strutted with firm steps up to the scattered shot, and, despising all danger which might be produced from a sudden explosion, began to tramp it with her feet. When the danger, in her opinion, was passed, she called Mikhéy and ordered him to throw all that "powder" as far away as possible, or, better still, into the water, and, proudly shaking her cap, directed her steps to the drawing-room. "They are watching them well, I must say," she grumbled.

When papa came from the wing, and we went together to grandmother, Mimi was already sitting in the room near the window, and sternly looked beyond the door with a certain mysterious and official glance. In her hand was something wrapped in several folds of paper. I guessed that it was the shot, and that grandmother, no doubt, knew everything.

Besides Mimi, there were in grandmother's room chambermaid Gásha, who, to judge from her angry red face, was greatly agitated, and Doctor Blumenthal, a small, pockmarked man, who was trying in vain to quiet

Gásha, by making with his eyes and head some mysterious, pacifying signs to her.

Grandmother herself was sitting a little to one side, and was laying out a solitaire, a "Traveller," which always signified a very inauspicious frame of mind.

"How are you feeling to-day, mamma? Have you rested well?" asked papa, respectfully kissing her hand.

"Nicely, my dear. I think you know that I am always well," answered grandmother, in a tone which indicated that the question was very much out of place and offensive. "Well, are you going to give me a clean handkerchief?" she continued, turning to Gásha.

"I have handed it to you," answered Gásha, pointing to a snow-white batiste handkerchief, which was lying on the arm of the chair.

"Take away this dirty rag, and give me a clean handkerchief, my dear!"

Gásha walked up to the chiffonier, pulled out a drawer, and slammed it so hard that the windows of the room began to rattle. Grandmother looked sternly at all of us, and continued to watch all the movements of the chambermaid. When she handed to her, as it seemed to me, the same handkerchief, grandmother said:

"And when are you going to crush some snuff for me, my dear?"

"I will crush it, if I have time."

"What did you say?"

"I will crush it to-day."

"If you do not wish to serve with me, my dear, you ought to say so; I should have let you off long ago."

"You may let me off; I sha'n't cry," grumbled the chambermaid, half aloud.

Just then the doctor began to beckon to her, but she looked at him so angrily and firmly, that he immediately dropped his head, and busied himself with his watch-key.

"You see, my dear," said grandmother, turning to

papa, when Gásha, continuing to grumble, left the room, "how they treat me in my own house?"

"Permit me, mamma, I shall crush some snuff for you, myself," said papa, who, evidently, was much perplexed by this unexpected behaviour.

"No, thank you: she is so impudent because she knows that no one else knows so well how to crush the snuff as I like it. You know, my dear," continued grandmother, after a moment's silence, "that your children came very near burning the house to-day?"

Papa looked with respectful curiosity at grandmother.

"Yes, that is what they are playing with. Show it to him," she said, turning to Mimi.

Papa took the shot in his hand, and could not help smiling.

"But this is shot," he said, "and it is not at all dangerous."

"Thank you, my dear, for instructing me, only I am a little too old —"

"Nerves, nerves!" whispered the doctor.

And papa forthwith turned to us:

"Where did you get it? and how dare you play with such things?"

"You do not have to ask them, but you had better ask the *valet*," said grandmother, pronouncing the word "valet" with especial contempt. "That is the way he is watching."

"Vóldemar said that Karl Ivánovich himself had given him this powder," Mimi hastened to add.

"Now, you see what a fine man he is," continued grandmother. "And where is he, that *valet*, what do you call him? Send for him!"

"I have given him permission to make some visits," said papa.

"That is no reason. He ought always to be here. The children are not mine, but yours, and I have no

right to advise you, because you are wiser than I," continued grandmother, "but it seems to me, it is time to get a tutor for them, and not a *valet*, a German churl. Yes, a stupid churl who can't teach them anything but bad manners and Tyrolese songs. I ask you, what need have your children to know how to sing Tyrolese songs? However, *now* there is nobody to think of these things, and you may do as you please."

The word "now" meant "since they have no mother," and it called forth sad memories in grandmother's heart. She lowered her eyes upon the snuff-box with a portrait upon it, and fell to musing.

"I have been thinking of it for quite awhile," papa hastened to say, "and had intended to take counsel with you, mamma. Had I not better propose the place to St. Jérôme, who has been giving them hour lessons?"

"You will do well, my dear," said grandmother, no longer in the dissatisfied voice in which she had been speaking. "St. Jérôme is at least a tutor, who will know how to manage *des enfants de bonne maison*, and not an ordinary *ménin* valet, who is only good to take them out for an airing."

"I will speak to him to-morrow," said papa.

Two days after this conversation, Karl Ivánovich really gave up his place to the young French dandy.

VIII.

THE HISTORY OF KARL IVÁNOVICH

LATE in the evening preceding the day when Karl Ivánovich was for ever to leave us, he stood in his wadded gown and red cap near his bed and, bending over his portmanteau, packed his things with great care.

Toward the end Karl Ivánovich's behaviour to us was exceedingly formal; he seemed to avoid all relations with us. Even now, when I entered the room, he looked at me askance, and again betook himself to his work. I lay down on my bed, and Karl Ivánovich, who formerly used to forbid it, said not a word to me, and the thought that he no longer would scold us, nor stop us, and that he had no business with us, vividly reminded me of the impending separation. I felt sad because he no longer loved us, and I wished to express this feeling to him.

"Permit me to help you, Karl Ivánovich," I said, approaching him.

He looked at me and again turned away, but in the cursory glance which he cast upon me I read not indifference, by which I explained his coldness, but genuine and concentrated sorrow.

"God sees everything and knows everything, and His holy will is in everything," he said, straightening himself out the full length of his stature, and drawing a deep breath. "Yes, Nikólenka," he continued, when he noticed the expression of sincere sympathy with which I was looking at him, "it has been my fate to be unhappy

from my earliest childhood to my grave. I have always been paid with evil for the good which I have done people, and my reward is not here, but there," he said, pointing to heaven. "If you knew my history and all I have suffered in this life! I was a shoemaker, I was a soldier, I was a deserter, I was a manufacturer, I was a teacher, and now I am zero, and I have, like the Son of God, no place where to lay my head," he concluded and, closing his eyes, dropped down into his chair.

Noticing that Karl Iványovich was in that sentimental frame of mind when he paid no attention to his hearers and expressed his secret thoughts to himself, I seated myself on my bed, and in silence fixed my eyes on his good face.

"You are not a child, you can understand! I shall tell you my history and all I have suffered in this life. Some day you will think of your old friend who loved you children very much!"

Karl Iványovich leaned with his arm against the small table which was standing near him, took a pinch of snuff, and, rolling his eyes to heaven, began his story in that peculiar, even, guttural voice, in which he generally dictated to us:

"I vos unhappy even in de lap of my moder. *Das Unglück verfolgte mich schon im Schosse meiner Mutter!*" he repeated with greater feeling.

Since Karl Iványovich told me his history often afterward, following the same order, and using the same expressions and ever unchanged intonations, I hope I shall be able to render it almost word for word, except, of course, for the irregularities of language, of which the reader may judge by the first sentence. I have not yet decided whether it was his real history, or the production of his fancy, which originated during his lonely life in our house, and which he had himself come to believe from his frequent repetitions, or whether he had adorned the

actual facts of his life with fantastic incidents. On the one hand, he told his history with too much feeling and methodical consistency, which form the chief characteristics of verisimilitude, not to be believed; on the other hand, there were too many poetical beauties in his history, so that these very beauties provoked doubt.

"Through my veins courses the noble blood of the Counts of Sommerblatt! *In meinen Adern fliesst das edle Blut der Grafen von Sommerblatt!* I was born six weeks after the wedding. The husband of my mother (I called him father) was a tenant at Count von Sommerblatt's. He could not forget my mother's shame, and did not like me. I had a smaller brother, Johann, and two sisters; but I was a stranger in my own family! *Ich war ein Fremder in meiner eigenen Familie!* When Johann did anything naughty, father said: 'I shall not have a moment of peace with this child Karl!' and I was scolded and punished. When my sisters quarrelled, father said: 'Karl will never be an obedient child!' and I was scolded and punished. Only my good mother loved and petted me. She frequently said to me, 'Karl, come here, into my room!' and she softly kissed me. 'Poor, poor Karl,' she said, 'nobody loves you, but I would not exchange you for anybody. Your mother asks only this of you,' she said to me, 'study well, and be always an honest man, and God will not abandon you!' *'Trachte nur ein ehrlicher Deutscher zu werden,' sagte sie, 'und der liebe Gott wird dich nicht verlassen!'* And I tried.

"When I was fourteen years old, and I could go to confirmation, mother said to father: 'Karl is now a grown-up boy, Gustav. What are we going to do with him?' And father said: 'I do not know.' Then mother said: 'We shall take him to town to Mr. Schulz, so he may become a shoemaker!' and father said: 'All right!' *und mein Vater sagte: 'Gut!'* I lived six years and seven months in town with my master, the shoemaker, and my

master loved me. He said: 'Karl is a good workman, and he will soon be my *Geselle!*' but man proposes, and God disposes. In 1796 a general conscription was announced, and everybody who could serve, from eighteen years of age to twenty-one, was to appear in town.

"Father and brother Johann arrived in town, and we all went together to cast a *Loos*, who was to be *Soldat*, and who was not to be *Soldat*. Johann drew a bad number, — he was to be *Soldat;* I drew a good number, — I was not to be *Soldat*. And father said: 'I had an only son, and I have to part from him!' '*Ich hatte einen einzigen Sohn, und von diesem muss ich mich trennen!*'

"I took his hand and said: 'Why do you say so, father? Come with me, and I will tell you something.' And father went. Father went, and we seated ourselves in the inn at a small table. 'Give us two *Bierkrug!*' I said, and they brought them to us. We drank a glass each, and brother Johann drank also.

"'Father!' I said, 'do not say that you had an only son, and that you have to part from him! My heart wants to jump out, when I hear this. Brother Johann shall not serve, — I will be *Soldat*. Karl is of no use here to anybody, and Karl will be *Soldat*.'

"'You are an honest man, Karl Ivánovich!' said father to me and kissed me. '*Du bist ein braver Bursche!*' *sagte mir mein Vater und küsste mich!*

"And I became *Soldat*."

IX.

CONTINUATION

"THEN was a terrible time, Nikólenka," continued Karl Ivánovich, — "then was Napoleon. He wanted to conquer Germany, and we defended our country to our last drop of blood! *und wir vertheidigten unser Vaterland bis auf den letzten Tropfen Blut!*

"I was at Ulm, I was at Austerlitz! I was at Wagram! *Ich war bei Wagram!*"

"Did you yourself take part in the battles?" I asked him, looking at him in wonderment. "Did you kill people yourself?"

Karl Ivánovich soon quieted me in regard to this.

"Once a French *Grenadier* lagged behind his own, and fell down on the road. I ran up to him with my gun, and wanted to pierce him, *aber der Franzose warf sein Gewehr und rief Pardon*, and I let him alone!

"At Wagram Napoleon drove us to an island, and surrounded us so that it was impossible to escape. We had no provision for three days, and we stood up to our knees in water. Miscreant Napoleon neither took us prisoners, nor let us get away! *und der Bösewicht Napoleon wollte uns nicht gefangen nehmen und auch nicht freilassen!*

"On the fourth day, thank the Lord, we were taken prisoners, and were led into a fortress. I had my blue pantaloons, a uniform of good cloth, fifteen thalers of money and a silver watch, a present from my father.

A French *Soldat* took it all away from me. Fortunately I had three ducats which mother had sewed up under my jacket. Nobody found them!

"I did not wish to stay long in the fortress, and so I decided to run. Once, upon a great holiday, I said to the sergeant who was watching us: 'Mr. Sergeant, to-day is a great holiday, and I want to celebrate it. Bring me, if you please, a bottle of Madeira, and we will drink it together.' And the sergeant said 'All right!' When the sergeant brought the Madeira, and we had drunk a wine-glass full, I took his hand, and said: 'Mr. Sergeant, you probably have a father and a mother, too.' He said: 'I have, Mr. Mauer.' 'My parents,' I said, 'have not seen me for eight years, and they do not know whether I am alive, or whether my bones have long been lying in the damp earth. O Mr. Sergeant! I have two ducats that were under my jacket, — take them, and let me off! Be my benefactor, and my mother will pray to the Almighty for you all her life.'

"The sergeant drank a glass of Madeira and said: 'Mr. Mauer, I love you and pity you very much, only you are a captive, and I am a *Soldat!*' I pressed his hand and said: 'Mr. Sergeant!' *Ich drückte ihm die Hand und sagte: 'Herr Serjant!'*

"And the sergeant said: 'You are a poor man, and I will not take your money, but I will help you. When I go to bed, buy a pail of brandy for the *Soldat*, and they will sleep. I will not see you.'

"He was a good man. I bought a pail of brandy, and when the *Soldat* were drunk, I put on my boots and an old cloak, and went softly out into the yard. I went on the rampart, and wanted to jump, but there was water below, and I did not want to spoil my last garment. I went to the gate.

"A sentinel was going *auf und ab* with his gun, and he looked at me: *'Qui vive?' sagte er auf ein Mal*, and I

was silent. *'Qui vive?' sagte er zum zweiten Mal,* and I was silent. *'Qui vive?' sagte er zum dritten Mal,* and I ran. I jumped into the water, climbed up the other side, and ran. *Ich sprang in's Wasser, kletterte auf die andere Seite und machte mich aus dem Staube.*

"The whole night I ran along the road, but when it dawned, I was afraid I should be recognized, so I hid myself in the high rye. There I knelt, folded my hands, thanked the Heavenly Father for my salvation, and fell asleep with a peaceful feeling. *Ich dankte dem Allmächtigen Gott für seine Barmherzigkeit und mit beruhigtem Gefühl schlief ich ein.*

"I awoke in the evening and walked on. Suddenly a large German wagon with two black horses overtook me. In the wagon sat a well-dressed man, who smoked a pipe and looked at me. I went slower, to let the wagon get by me; but as I went slowly, so did the wagon, and the man looked at me. I went faster, and the wagon went faster, and the man looked at me. I sat down near the road; the man stopped his horses, and looked at me. 'Young man,' he said, 'whither are you going so late?' I said: 'I am going to Frankfurt.' 'Get into my wagon, there is a place here, and I will take you there. Why have you nothing with you, why is your beard not shaven, and why are all your clothes dirty?' said he to me, when I took my seat. 'I am a poor man,' I said, 'and I want to find some place in a factory; and my garments are dirty because I fell down on the road.' 'You are not telling the truth, young man,' he said, 'the roads are dry now.'

"And I was silent.

"'Tell me the whole truth,' said the good man to me, 'who you are, and whence you are coming! I like your face, and, if you are an honest man, I will help you.'

"And I told him everything. He said: 'All right, young man, come with me to my rope factory. I will

give you work, clothes, and money, and you shall live with me.'

"And I said: 'All right!'

"We came to the rope factory, and the good man said to his wife: 'Here is a young man who has fought for his country and has run away from captivity. He has no home nor clothes nor bread. He will live with me. Give him clean linen and feed him.'

"I lived for a year and a half in the rope factory, and my master liked me so much that he did not wish to let me go. And I was happy there. I was then a handsome man: I was young, tall, had blue eyes, and a Roman nose, and Madame L—— (I cannot tell you her name), the wife of my master, was a young, beautiful lady. And she fell in love with me.

"When she saw me, she said: 'Mr. Mauer, how does your mother call you?' I said: 'Karlchen.'

"And she said, 'Karlchen, sit down by my side!'

"I sat down beside her, and she said: 'Karlchen, kiss me!'

"I kissed her, and she said: 'Karlchen, I love you so much that I can't stand it any longer,' and she began to tremble."

Here Karl Ivánovich made a protracted pause and, rolling his good blue eyes and lightly shaking his head, smiled, as people always smile under the influence of agreeable reminiscences.

"Yes," he began once more, fixing himself in his chair, and wrapping his gown about him, "I have experienced many good and bad things in my life, but here is my witness," he said, pointing to an image of the Saviour, embroidered on canvas, which hung over his bed, "nobody can say that Karl Ivánovich is a dishonest man! I did not wish to repay by black ingratitude the good which Mr. L—— had done me, and I decided to run away. In the evening, when all were asleep, I wrote a letter to my

master which I placed on the table in my room; then I took my clothes and three thalers of money, and softly went into the street. Nobody saw me, and I walked along the road."

X.

CONTINUATION

"I HAD not seen my mother for nine years, and I did not know whether she was alive, or whether her bones were already resting in the damp earth. I went to my native home. When I came to the town, I asked where Gustav Mauer lived, who had been a tenant at Count von Sommerblatt's. And they said to me: 'Count von Sommerblatt has died, and Gustav Mauer is living now on the wide street, and keeping a store for *liqueurs*.' I put on my new waistcoat, a good coat, — a present from the manufacturer, — fixed my hair nicely, and went to my father's liquor store. Sister Mariechen was sitting there, and asked me what I wanted. I said: 'May I drink a glass of liqueur?' and she said: '*Vater*, a young man is asking for a glass of liqueur.' And father said: 'Give the young man a glass of liqueur!' I sat down at the table, drank my glass, smoked a pipe, and looked at father, at Mariechen, and at Johann, who had also come into the store. In our conversation father said to me: 'You, no doubt, know where our *Armee* is stationed now!' I said: 'I myself have come from the *Armee*, and it is stationed at *Wien*.' 'Our son,' said father, 'was a *Soldat*, and now he has not written to us for nine years, and we do not know whether he is alive or dead. My wife always weeps for him.' I smoked my pipe and said: 'What was the name of your son, and where did he serve? Maybe I know him.' 'His name is Karl Mauer, and he served

with the Austrian chasseurs,' said my father. 'He is tall and a fine-looking man, just like you,' said sister Mariechen. I said: 'I know your Karl.' '*Amalia!*' *sagte auf einmal mein Vater,* 'come here! Here is a young man who knows our Karl.' Ant my dear moder comes out from the back door. I at once knew her. 'You know our Karl,' and she looks at me, and is all pale and trembles! 'Yes, I have seen him,' I said, and did not dare to raise my eyes to her: my heart wanted to break. 'My Karl is alive!' said mother. 'The Lord be thanked. Where is he, my dear Karl? I could die in peace, if I could look once more upon him, upon my beloved son; but God does not wish it,' and she burst out into tears. I could not stand it any longer. 'Mother!' I said, 'I am your Karl,' and she fell into my arms."

Karl Ivánovich covered his eyes, and his lips trembled.

"'*Mutter!*' *sagte ich,* '*ich bin ihr Sohn, ich bin ihr Karl!*' *und sie stürzte mir in die Arme,*" he repeated, after quieting down and wiping off the tears which rolled down his cheeks.

"But it did not please God that I should end my days in my native country. A misfortune was decreed for me! *Das Unglück verfolgte mich überall!* I lived in my home only three months. One Sunday I was in a coffee-house, where I ordered a mug of beer, smoked my pipe, and chatted with my acquaintances about *Politik*, about Emperor Franz, about Napoleon, and about the war, and everybody expressed his opinion. Near us sat a strange gentleman in a gray *Ueberrock*, who drank coffee, smoked a pipe, and did not speak with us. *Er rauchte sein Pfeifchen und shwieg still.* When the *Nachtwächter* called the tenth hour, I took my hat, paid my bill, and went home. At midnight somebody knocked at our door. I awoke and said: 'Who is there?' '*Macht auf!*' I said: 'Say who you are, and I will open.' *Ich sagte:* '*Sagt wer ihr seid, und ich werde aufmachen.*' '*Macht auf im Namen*

des Gesetzes!' somebody said at the door. I opened. Two *Soldat* with guns stood at the door, and into the room entered the strange man in the gray *Ueberrock*, who had been sitting near us in the coffee-house. He was a spy! *Es war ein Spion!* 'Come with me!' said the spy. 'All right!' said I. I put on my boots and pantaloons, and my suspenders, and walked up and down the room. My blood boiled. I said to myself, he was a scoundrel. When I walked up to the wall where my sword was hanging, I grabbed it suddenly and said: 'You are a spy, defend yourself!' '*Du bist ein Spion, vertheidige dich!*' *Ich gab einen Hieb* to the right, *einen Hieb* to the left, and one upon his head. The spy fell! I seized my portmanteau and money, and jumped out of the window. *Ich nahm meinen Mantelsack und Beutel und sprang zum Fenster hinaus. Ich kam nach Ems.* There I became acquainted with General Zázin. He took a fancy to me, got a passport for me from the ambassador, and took me with him to Russia to teach his children. When General Zázin died, your mother employed me. She said: 'Karl Ivánovich! I give my children to you, and I shall never abandon you; I shall assure you an easy old age.' Now she is no more, and everything is forgotten. In return for the twenty years of my service I have to go now into the street, old as I am, to find a crust of dry bread. *Got sees dat, and knows dat, and for dat is His holy will — only I am sorry for you, my childers!*" concluded Karl Ivánovich, drawing me to him and kissing my head.

XI.

ONE[1]

AFTER a year's mourning, grandmother had a little recovered from the grief which had struck her down, and she began now and then to receive guests, especially girls and boys who were of our age.

On the 13th of December, Lyúbochka's birthday, there came even before dinner Princess Kornákov with her daughters, Madame Valákhin with Sónichka, Ilínka Grap, and the two younger brothers of the Ivins.

The sound of conversation, laughter, and running about reached us from below, where the whole company had gathered, but we could not join them before the end of the morning classes. On the schedule which hung in the class-room it said: *Lundi, de 2 à 3, maître d'histoire et de géographie;* and it was this *maître d'histoire* whom we had to wait for, listen to, and see off, before we could be free. It was already twenty minutes past two, but the teacher of history had not yet arrived, nor could he be heard or seen in the street, over which he had to pass to reach us, and upon which I was looking with a strong desire not to see him.

"Apparently Lébedev is not coming to-day," said Voló-dya, raising his eyes for a moment from Smarágdov's text-book, from which he was preparing his lesson.

"May the Lord grant it be so, for I do not know a thing

[1] One is the lowest, and five the highest mark in Russian schools.

about the lesson — However, however, here he comes," I added, in a sad voice.

Volódya rose from his seat and went up to the window.

"No, that is not he, that is some gentleman," said he. "We shall wait until half-past two," he added, stretching himself and at the same time scratching his crown, as he was in the habit of doing whenever he rested for a minute from his work. "If he is not here by half-past two, we shall tell St. Jérôme to pick up the copy-books."

"What does he want to be coming for?" I said, also stretching myself and shaking over my head the book of Kaydánov, which I held in both my hands.

Having nothing to do, I opened the book where the lesson was, and began to read it. It was a long and hard lesson; I did not know a thing about it, and I saw that I should never have enough time to learn a thing, especially since I was in that nervous condition when the thoughts refuse to centre on any subject whatsoever.

Lébedev had complained about me to St. Jérôme for my previous lesson in history, a subject which had always seemed to me tiresome and hard, and he had written down in the book in which the marks were kept, number two, which was regarded as very bad. St. Jérôme told me then, that if I should get less than three at the next lesson, I should be punished severely. This next lesson was before me and, I confess, I trembled.

I had been so absorbed in the reading of the unfamiliar lesson that I was startled by the noise of taking off overshoes, which was heard in the antechamber. I had not had any time to look around, when in the door appeared the pockmarked, despised face and the familiar, awkward figure of the teacher, in his buttoned blue dress coat with the buttons of the learned profession.

The teacher slowly put his hat on the window, and his note-books on the table, with both his hands spread the

folds of his coat, as though this was absolutely necessary, and, puffing, sat down in his chair.

"Well, gentlemen," he said, rubbing his clammy hands against each other, "first we shall go over what was said in the previous lesson, and then I shall try to acquaint you with the next events of the Middle Ages."

This meant: Recite your lesson.

While Volódya answered him with a freedom and self-assurance peculiar to those who know their subject well, I, without any aim whatsoever, went out on the staircase, and, since it was not possible to go down-stairs, I quite naturally walked up to the landing. I had just intended to settle in my usual place of observation, when Mimi, who always was the cause of my misfortunes, suddenly bumped against me. "You are here?" she said, looking threateningly at me, then at the door of the maids' room, and then again at me.

I felt myself thoroughly guilty, both because I was not at the lesson, and because I found myself in such an improper place, so I kept silent and, lowering my head, presented a most pathetic picture of repentance.

"No, that passes all bounds!" said Mimi. "What were you doing here?" I kept silent. "No, that can't remain this way!" she repeated, striking the knuckles of her fingers against the balustrade of the staircase, "I shall tell everything to the countess."

It was five minutes to three, when I returned to the schoolroom. The teacher, acting as though he had not noticed my absence nor my presence, was explaining the next lesson to Volódya. When, after having finished his explanations, he began to fold up his note-books, and Volódya went into the other room to bring him his ticket, the joyful thought struck me that it was all over, and that I was forgotten.

But suddenly the teacher turned to me with a mischievous half-smile.

"I hope that you have learned your lesson, sir," he said, rubbing his hands.

"I have, sir," I answered.

"Will you take the trouble to tell me something about the crusade of St. Louis?" he said, swaying in his chair, and pensively looking between his legs. "You will first tell me about the reason which caused the French king to take up the cross," he said, raising his eyebrows and pointing his finger to the inkstand, "then explain to me the general characteristic features of that crusade," he added, moving his whole wrist as if he wanted to catch something, "and finally, the effect of that crusade upon the European countries in general," he said, striking the left part of the table with his note-books, "upon the French realm in particular," he concluded, striking the right side of the table, and bending his head to the right.

I swallowed several times, hemmed and hawed, bent my head to one side, and kept silent. Then I picked up a goose-quill which was lying on the table, and began to tear it to pieces, but I kept silent all the time.

"Let me have the pen," said the teacher to me, stretching out his hand. "It could be used yet. Well, sir?"

"Louis — Kar — Louis the Holy was — was — was — a good and wise Tsar —"

"What, sir?"

"Tsar. He had got it into his head to go to Jerusalem, and he transferred the reins of government to his mother."

"What was her name?"

"B — b — lanka."

"What? Bulánka?"[1]

I smiled a sinister and awkward smile.

"Well, sir, is there anything else you know?" he said, smiling.

I had nothing to lose, so I coughed and began to tell

[1] Name of a dun horse.

anything that occurred to me. The teacher did not say anything, and only swept off the dust from the table with the pen which he had taken away from me; he stared somewhere beyond my ear, and now and then exclaimed: "Very well, sir, very well, sir." I felt that I did not know a thing, that I did not express myself as I ought to, and I was very much pained because my teacher did not stop me, or correct me.

"Why did he get it into his head to go to Jerusalem?" said the teacher, repeating my own words.

"Because — on account of — since — in as much as —"

I was completely floored, did not say another word, and felt that if that rascal of a teacher were to be silent for a whole year and looking interrogatively at me all the time, I should not be able to utter another sound. The teacher looked at me for about three minutes, then his face suddenly manifested an expression of profound grief, and, in a pathetic voice, he said to Volódya who had just entered the room:

"Please let me have the book for the marks!"

Volódya gave him the book, and gently placed a ticket near it.

The teacher opened the book and, carefully dipping the pen, in a beautiful hand marked Volódya number five in the columns for progress and deportment. Then, resting the pen over the line where my marks were to be put down, he glanced at me, shook off the ink, and thought awhile.

Suddenly his hand made a scarcely perceptible motion, and in the column appeared a beautifully written number one, with a period after it; another motion, and in the column for deportment went down another number one, with a period after it.

Carefully folding the book with the marks, the teacher rose and walked to the door, as though he had not noticed

my glance, in which were expressed despair, supplication, and reproach.

"Mikhaíl Lariónovich!" said I.

"No," he answered, guessing what I intended to tell him, "you can't study that way. I will not take money for nothing."

The teacher put on his overshoes and camlet overcoat, and carefully wrapped himself in a shawl. As if one could think of anything, after what had happened to me! For him it was but a movement of the pen, but for me it was my greatest misfortune.

"Is the lesson over?" asked St. Jérôme, as he entered the room.

"Yes."

"Was the teacher satisfied with you?"

"Yes," said Volódya.

"What did you get?"

"Five."

"And Nicolas?"

I was silent.

"I think, four," said Volódya.

He knew I had to be saved, if only for to-day. Let them punish me, as long as it was not to-day, when guests were at the house.

"*Voyons, messieurs!*" (St. Jérôme was in the habit of saying *voyons!* to everything.) "*Faîtes votre toilette et descendons!*"

XII.

THE SMALL KEY

We had barely greeted the guests, upon coming downstairs, when we were called to table. Papa was in a very happy frame of mind (he had been winning of late); he had presented Lyúbochka with a costly silver tea service, and at dinner he remembered that he had left a bonbonnière for her in his room in the wing.

"What is the use sending a servant there? You had better go there yourself, Kokó!" he said to me. "The keys are in the shell on the large table, you know. So take them, and with the largest key open the second drawer at the right. There you will find the candy box. The candy is in paper; bring it here!"

"And shall I bring you any cigars?" I asked, knowing that he always sent for them after dinner.

"Bring some, only don't touch anything; you hear?" he said, as I went out.

I found the keys in the place indicated, and was on the point of opening the drawer, when I was arrested by the desire of finding out what thing the tiny key of the bunch could open.

On the table stood, against a small railing, among a thousand different things, a hand-sewn portfolio with a padlock, and I was dying to find out whether the small key would fit in it. My effort was rewarded with complete success, the portfolio was opened, and inside I found a whole stack of papers. My feeling of curiosity so per-

suasively compelled me to find out what kind of papers they were, that I was not able to listen to the voice of my conscience, and began to examine what was in the portfolio.

The childish feeling of unconditional respect for older people, especially for papa, was so strong in me, that my mind unconsciously refused to draw any conclusions from what I saw. I felt that papa was living in an entirely separate, beautiful, inapproachable, and incomprehensible sphere, and that it would be a kind of sacrilege for me to try to penetrate the secrets of his life.

For this reason the discoveries which I had made, almost by accident, in papa's portfolio did not leave any clear idea with me, except a dim consciousness of having done something bad. I felt ashamed and ill at ease.

Under the influence of this feeling I wanted to close the portfolio as quickly as possible, but I was evidently fated to experience all kinds of misfortunes upon that memorable day. When I put the key into the keyhole, I turned it in the wrong direction. Thinking that the padlock was locked, I pulled the key out, and, oh, horror! only the head of the key was left in my hands. I tried in vain to connect it with the half which was left in the keyhole, and by some magic to extricate it. At last I had to get used to the terrible thought that I had committed a new crime, which would be discovered that very day, upon papa's return to his cabinet.

Mimi's complaint, number one, and the key! Nothing worse could have happened to me. Grandmother — for Mimi's complaint, St. Jérôme — for number one, and papa — for the key, — all that would overwhelm me not later than that very evening.

"What will become of me? Oh, what have I done!" I said aloud, as I walked across the soft carpet of the cabinet. "Oh, well!" I said to myself, getting the confectionary and the cigars, "there is no escaping fate," and I ran to the house.

That fatalistic expression, which I had caught from Nikoláy in my childhood, had produced upon me, in all the heavy moments of my life, a beneficent, temporarily soothing effect. When I entered the parlour, I was in a somewhat nervous and unnatural, but exceedingly happy frame of mind.

XIII.

THE TRAITRESS

AFTER dinner began the *petits jeux*, and I took a very lively part in them. As we were playing "Cat-and-mouse," I awkwardly ran against the governess of the Kornákovs, and, accidentally stepping on her skirt, tore it. When I noticed that all the girls, but particularly Sónichka, took great delight in seeing the governess put out about it, and going to the maids' room to fix her dress, I decided I would afford them that pleasure once more. In consequence of this amiable intention, I began to gallop around the governess, the moment she returned to the room, and continued these evolutions until I found a favourable opportunity of catching my heel in her skirt, and tearing it. Sónichka and the princesses could hardly hold themselves with laughing, which very agreeably flattered my egoism, but St. Jérôme, who had evidently noticed my tricks, said that I was too merry for any good, and that if I would not behave better, he would make me feel sorry, in spite of the celebration.

I was in the irritated condition of a man who has lost more than he has in his pocket, who is afraid to look up his standing, and proceeds to play desperately, without any hope of winning back, but only in order not to give himself any time to come to his senses. I smiled insolently and walked away from him.

After the "cat-and-mouse," somebody started a game

which, I think, is called "Lange Nase" with us. The game consisted in placing two rows of chairs facing each other, and dividing the ladies and gentlemen into two parties, and having each chosen from the other by alternation.

The younger princess chose every time the younger Ivin, Kátenka chose Volódya or Ilínka, and Sónichka — every time Serézha, and she was, to my great amazement, not in the least ashamed when Serézha went and seated himself right opposite her. She laughed her sweet, melodious laugh and nodded her head to him in token that he had guessed correctly. Nobody chose me. This greatly offended my vanity, and I understood that I was superfluous, one who is left over, and that they had to say of me every time: "Who is left over? Yes, Nikólenka. So you take him!" So that whenever I was out, I went up straight to sister, or to one of the homely princesses, and, to my misfortune, I never made a mistake. Sónichka, however, seemed to be so occupied with Serézha Ivin, that I did not exist for her at all. I do not know on what ground I mentally called her "traitress," for she had never given me a promise that she would choose me, and not Serézha; but I was firmly convinced that she acted in a most shameful manner toward me.

After the game I noticed that the "traitress," whom I despised, but from whom I nevertheless could not keep my eyes, had gone into the corner with Serézha and Kátenka, and that they were talking mysteriously about something. I stole behind the piano, in order to discover their secrets, and I saw this: Kátenka was holding a batiste handkerchief at two of its ends, so that it served for a screen and concealed Serézha's and Sónichka's heads. "No, you have lost, so pay your fine!" said Serézha. Sónichka dropped her hands, stood before him like a guilty person, and said, blushing: "No, I have not lost! Am I not right, Mademoiselle Catherine?" "I love

truth," answered Kátenka, "you have lost the wager, *ma chère!*"

No sooner had Kátenka pronounced these words than Serézha leaned over and kissed Sónichka. He just kissed her rosy lips. And Sónichka laughed as if that were all right, as if it were a very jolly thing. Terrible! O tricky traitress!

XIV.

THE ECLIPSE

I SUDDENLY felt a contempt for the whole feminine sex in general and for Sónichka in particular. I began to persuade myself that there was no fun in those games, and that they were good enough only for little girls, and I was dying to do some daring act and show such a bit of bravado as to make them wonder at me. The opportunity presented itself in due time.

St. Jérôme had a talk with Mimi about something, then he left the room. The sound of his steps was heard at first upon the staircase, then above us, in the classroom. It occurred to me that Mimi had told him where she had seen me during class hours, and that he had gone to look at the class book. At that time I could not suppose any other aim in St. Jérôme's life than the desire to punish me. I have read somewhere that children between twelve and fourteen years of age, that is, those who are in the transitional stage of boyhood, have a particular mania for arson and murder. As I think of my own boyhood and, in particular, of the state of my mind on that fatal day, I very clearly comprehend the possibility of an aimless crime, without any desire of doing harm, but just out of curiosity and out of an unconscious need of some activity. There are minutes when the future presents itself to a man in so sombre a light that he is afraid to rest his mental vision upon it, completely interrupts his mind's activity, and endeavours

to persuade himself that there will be no future and that there has been no past. In such minutes, when the mind does not judge in advance the determinations of the will, and carnal instincts are the only mainsprings of life that are left, a child without any experience, and predisposed to such a condition, naturally, without the least hesitation or fear, and with a smile of curiosity, starts up and fans a fire under his own house, where his brothers and his parents sleep, whom he loves tenderly. Under the influence of this same momentary absence of reasoning power, — almost under the influence of distraction, — a peasant lad of seventeen years of age, who is examining the edge of a newly ground axe near the bench on which his old father is sleeping face downward, suddenly swings his axe, and with dull curiosity looks at the blood gushing under the bench from the severed neck. Under the influence of the same absence of thought and of an instinctive curiosity a man finds a certain pleasure in stopping on the very brink of a precipice, and in thinking: "What if I jumped down there?" or in placing a loaded pistol to his forehead, and in thinking: "What if I pressed the trigger?" or in looking at some distinguished person, for whom all society has the profoundest respect, and in thinking: "What if I went up to him and took him by the nose, and said: 'Now, my dear sir, come along with me!'"

When St. Jérôme came down-stairs and told me that I had no right to be here to-day, because I had behaved and studied so badly, and that I should go up-stairs at once, I, under the influence of just such an inward agitation and absence of reasoning, showed him my tongue, and told him that I would not go.

At first St. Jérôme could not pronounce a word from amazement and anger.

"*C'est bien,*" he said to me, as he caught up with me, "I have more than once promised you a punishment,

from which your grandmother has been trying to save you. Now I see that nothing but the rod will make you obey, and to-day you have well deserved it."

He said that so loudly that all heard his words. My blood rushed with unusual vehemence to my heart. I felt it pulsating terribly, and pallor covering my face, and my lips quivering entirely against my will. I must have been terrible at that moment, because St. Jérôme avoided my look as he walked up to me and took me by my arm; but at the touch of his hand, I felt so badly that, forgetting myself in my anger, I drew my arm away from him and with all my boyish strength dealt him a blow.

"What is the matter with you?" said Volódya, approaching me, when he, in terror and amazement, saw my deed.

"Leave me alone!" I cried out to him through my tears. "You none of you love me, and you do not understand how unhappy I am! You are all mean and despicable!" I added, in a kind of stupor, turning to all the company assembled.

Just then St. Jérôme again walked up to me, with a determined and pale countenance, and, before I had any time to prepare myself for the defence, with a quick motion compressed both my arms, as in a vise, and pulled me away to some place. My head was dizzy from excitement. I remember only that I fought desperately with my head and knees as long as I had any strength left; I remember that my nose several times struck against somebody's thighs, that somebody's coat kept on getting into my mouth, and that all about me I heard the presence of somebody's feet, and smelled the smell of dust and of violets, with which St. Jérôme used to perfume himself.

Five minutes later the door of the lumber-room was closed after me.

"Vasíli!" he said in a contemptuous, triumphant voice, "bring some rods!"

XV.

DREAMS

COULD I have thought at that time that I should remain alive, after the many misfortunes which had befallen me, and that the time would come when I should think calmly of them?

As I considered what I had done, I was unable to imagine what would become of me, but I had a dim presentiment that I was irretrievably lost.

At first, complete silence reigned below me and about me, or at least it so appeared to me from too great an inward agitation. By degrees I began to distinguish different sounds. Vasíli came up-stairs and, throwing something that resembled a broom on the window, lay down on the clothes-bench, yawning. Below me was heard the loud voice of Avgúst Antónych (he, no doubt, was speaking about me), then some children's voices, then laughter and running, and a few minutes later everything in the house was moving as before, as if no one knew or cared to know that I was sitting in a dark lumber-room.

I was not crying, but something heavy, like a stone, lay upon my heart. Thoughts and pictures passed through my disturbed imagination with increased rapidity; but the recollection of the misfortune which had befallen me continually interrupted their fanciful chain, and I again entered into an inextricable labyrinth of uncertainty as to my impending fate, of despair, and of terror.

Then it occurred to me that there must have existed

a certain unknown reason for the universal hostility and hatred manifested toward me. (I was firmly convinced that all, beginning with grandmother and ending with coachman Filípp, hated me and found pleasure in my sufferings.) "It must be, I am not the son of my mother and of my father, not Volódya's brother, but some unfortunate orphan, a foundling, picked up for charity's sake," I said to myself, and that absurd idea not only afforded me some sad consolation, but appeared quite probable to me. It was a relief for me to think that I was unhappy, not because I was guilty, but because that had been my fate since my very birth, and because my fate resembled that of unfortunate Karl Ivánovich.

"But why should this secret be concealed any longer, since I myself have discovered it?" I said to myself. "I will go to-morrow to papa, and will say to him: 'Papa, you are in vain concealing the secret of my birth from me; I know it.' He will say to me: 'What is to be done, my dear? Sooner or later you would have found it out, — you are not my son, but I have adopted you, and if you will be worthy of my love, I shall never abandon you.' And I will tell him: 'Papa, although I have no right to call you by this name, I now pronounce it for the last time. I have always loved you, and always shall. I shall never forget that you are my benefactor, but I no longer can remain in your house. Here nobody loves me, and St. Jérôme has vowed to destroy me. Either he or I must leave your house, because I am not responsible for my acts, — I so hate that man that I am capable of doing anything. I will kill him, that's it precisely, I will kill him.' Papa will begin to reason with me, but I shall only wave my hand, and shall tell him: 'No, my friend and benefactor, we cannot live together, so let me go!' And I shall embrace him, and shall tell him, for some reason in French: '*Oh, mon père, oh, mon bienfaiteur, donne-moi pour la dernière fois ta benediction,*

et que la volonté de Dieu soit faite!'" At this thought I burst out into loud tears, as I sat on a box in the dark lumber-room. Suddenly I thought of the degrading punishment which awaited me, and the actual facts presented themselves in their real light to me, and my dreams were dispersed immediately.

Now I imagined I was already at liberty, out of our house. I joined the hussars, and went to war. Enemies bore down upon me from all sides, I brandished my sword and killed one; another brandish, and I killed a second, a third. At last, I fell to the ground, exhausted from wounds and fatigue, and cried, "Victory!" A general rode up to me and asked: "Where is he, our saviour?" They pointed to me, and he rushed to embrace me, and with tears of joy cried out, "Victory!" I grew well again, and, with my arm in a black sling, walked down the Tver Boulevard. I was a general! and the Tsar met me and asked: "Who is that wounded young man?" He was told that it was the famous hero, Nikoláy. The Tsar walked up to me and said: "I thank you. I shall do anything you may ask of me." I made a respectful bow, leaning upon my sword, and said: "I am happy, great Tsar, that I was able to shed my blood for my country, and I should like to die for it; but since you are so gracious as to permit me to ask something of you, I ask only this: permit me to destroy my enemy, the foreigner St. Jérôme. I want to destroy my enemy, St. Jérôme." I angrily stopped in front of St. Jérôme, and said to him: "You have caused my misfortune, *à genoux!*" Suddenly it occurred to me that the real St. Jérôme might come in any minute with the rods, and I again saw myself, not as a general who had saved his country, but as a most wretched and pitiful creature.

Then again I thought of God, and I boldly asked Him, for what He was punishing me. "I think I have never

forgotten to say my prayers, neither in the morning nor in the evening; then, what am I suffering for?" I can absolutely affirm that my first step in the direction of religious doubts, which agitated me in my boyhood, was made by me at this time, not because my misfortune had incited me to murmuring and unbelief, but because the thought of an unjust Providence, which had entered my mind at this moment of complete spiritual disorganization, rapidly sprouted and took root, just like an evil seed which after a rain has fallen on the loosened earth.

Then, again, I imagined that I should certainly die, and I represented vividly to myself St. Jérôme's astonishment when he would find my lifeless body in the lumber-room. I recalled the stories of Natálya Sávishna about the soul of a deceased person not leaving the house for forty days, and I mentally passed unnoticed, after my death, through all the rooms of grandmother's house, and listened to the genuine tears of Lyúbochka, to the laments of grandmother, and to papa's conversation with Avgúst Antónovich. "He was a fine boy," papa would say with tears in his eyes. "Yes," St. Jérôme would answer, "but a wild fellow." "You ought to respect the dead," papa would say, "you were the cause of his death, you have frightened him to death, and he could not bear the humiliation which you had caused him. Away from here, rascal!"

St. Jérôme would fall upon his knees, would weep and beg forgiveness. After forty days my soul would fly away to heaven. There I see something wonderfully beautiful, white, transparent, and long, and I feel it is my mother. This white form surrounds and pets me. "If it is really you," I say, "show yourself better, that I may be able to embrace you." And the voice answers me: "We are all like this here, I cannot embrace you any better. Are you not happy as it is?" "Yes, I am very happy, but you cannot tickle me, and I cannot kiss your hands."

"There is no need of it; it is nice here without it," she says, and I feel that it is nice indeed, and we fly together higher and higher.

Just then, it seemed, I awoke and found myself again on the box, in the lumber-room, with cheeks wet from tears, meaninglessly repeating the words: "And we fly higher and higher!" I made every imaginable effort to clear up my situation, but only a terribly gloomy, impenetrable distance presented itself to my mental vision. I tried to return to those consoling, happy dreams, which the consciousness of reality had interrupted, but to my astonishment I found, every time I returned on the road of my former dreams, that their continuation was impossible, and what was most remarkable, that they no longer afforded me any pleasure.

XVI.

AFTER GRINDING COMES FLOUR

I PASSED the night in the lumber-room, and nobody came to see me. Only the next day, that is, on Sunday, I was transferred to a small room, near the class-room, and was locked up again. I began to hope that my punishment would be limited to incarceration, and my thoughts grew calmer, under the influence of a sweet and refreshing sleep, of the bright sun which glistened on the frosty designs of the windows, and of the usual noise in the street in daytime. Nevertheless, the solitary confinement was hard to bear: I wanted to move about, to tell somebody everything that had accumulated within my soul, and there was no living being near me. This situation was the more disagreeable since I could not help hearing, however much I hated it, St. Jérôme pacing up and down his room, and calmly whistling some merry tunes. I was absolutely convinced that he did not want to whistle at all, but that he did so only to annoy me.

At two o'clock St. Jérôme and Volódya went downstairs, and Nikoláy brought me my dinner, and when I talked with him about what I had done, and what awaited me, he said:

"Oh, well, sir! Don't worry: After grinding comes flour."

Though this proverb, which later in life often fortified my spirit, gave me some consolation, the fact that they had sent me, not bread and water, but the whole dinner,

even dessert — white-loaves — gave me much concern. If they had not sent me the white-loaves, I should have concluded that the incarceration was my punishment, but now it appeared that I was not yet punished, that I was only removed from the others as a dangerous man, and that the punishment was still ahead. While I was deeply engaged in the solution of this question, a key was turned in the lock of my prison, and St. Jérôme entered the room, with an austere and official expression on his face.

"Come to grandmother!" he said, without looking at me.

I wanted to clean the sleeves of the blouse, that had become soiled by chalk, before leaving the room, but St. Jérôme said that this was entirely unnecessary, as though I was already in such a wretched moral state that it was not worth while to trouble myself about my appearance.

Kátenka, Lyúbochka, and Volódya gazed at me, as St. Jérôme led me by my arm through the parlour, with exactly the same expression with which we looked at the prisoners who used to be taken by our windows on Mondays. When I walked up to grandmother's armchair, with the intention of kissing her hand, she turned away from me and hid her hand under her mantilla.

"Yes, my dear," she said, after a protracted silence, during which she surveyed me from head to foot with such an expression that I did not know what to do with my eyes and hands, "I must say you value my love very much, and afford me genuine consolation. M. St. Jérôme, who, at my request," she added, stretching out every word, "undertook your education, does not wish to stay in my house any longer. And why? On your account, my dear. I had hoped that you would be grateful," she continued, after a moment's silence and in a tone which proved that her speech had been prepared long before, "for his care and labours, that you would know how to

value his deserts, whereas you, pert little urchin, have dared to lift your hand against him! Very well! Beautiful! I am beginning to think myself that you are not capable of understanding kind treatment, and that other, lower means must be used with you. Immediately ask his pardon," she added, in a stern, commanding tone, pointing to St. Jérôme; "do you hear?"

I looked in the direction indicated by grandmother's hand, and, noticing St. Jérôme's coat, turned away and did not budge from the spot, a sensation of fainting overcoming me again.

"Well, do you not hear what I am saying to you?"

I trembled with my whole body, but did not budge.

"Kokó!" said grandmother, when she, evidently, observed the inward suffering which I was experiencing. "Kokó," she said, this time not so much in a commanding, as in a tender voice, "is it you?"

"Grandmother, I will not ask his pardon for anything," I said, and suddenly stopped, for I felt that I should not be able to restrain the tears that were choking me, if I were to say another word.

"I command you, I beg you. What is the matter with you?"

"I — I — do not — want to — I cannot," I muttered, and the checked sobs, which had accumulated in my breast, suddenly burst their barrier, and issued in a furious torrent.

"*C'est ainsi que vous obéissez à votre seconde mère, c'est ainsi que vous reconnaissez ses bontés*," said St. Jérôme in a tragic voice. "*A genoux!*"

"My God, if she saw this!" said grandmother, turning away from me and wiping off the tears that had appeared in her eyes.

"If she saw this! But all is for the best. Yes, she would not have lived through this sorrow, she would not."

And grandmother wept harder and harder. I, too, wept, but I did not even think of asking forgiveness.

"*Tranquillisez-vous au nom du ciel, Madame la Comtesse,*" said St. Jérôme.

But grandmother was not listening to him. She covered her face with her hands, and her sobs soon passed into hiccoughs and hysterics. Mimi and Gásha ran into the room with frightened faces, there was an odour of spirits, and the whole house was on its feet and whispering.

"Enjoy what you have done," said St. Jérôme, as he led me up-stairs.

"O God! what have I done? What a terrible criminal I am!"

No sooner had St. Jérôme walked down-stairs, after ordering me to go to my room, than I ran down the large staircase which led to the street, without being clearly conscious of what I was doing.

"Whither are you running?" a familiar voice suddenly asked me. "I want you, my darling!"

I wanted to run by him, but father caught my arm, and said, sternly:

"Come with me, my dear! How did you dare to touch the portfolio in my cabinet?" He led me into the small sofa-room. "Well? Why don't you say something? Well?" he added, pulling my ear.

"I am guilty," I said. "I do not know myself what tempted me!"

"Oh, you don't know what tempted you, you don't know, you don't, you don't, you don't," he repeated, at every word shaking my ear. "Will you ever again put in your nose where it does not belong? Will you? Will you?"

Though I felt a terrible pain in my ear, I did not weep, but experienced a pleasant moral sensation. The moment he let my ear go, I seized his hand, and, with tears in my eyes, began to cover it with kisses.

"Strike me again," I said through my tears, "harder,

more! I am a good-for-nothing, miserable, unhappy man!"

"What is the matter with you?" he said, pushing me lightly aside.

"No, I sha'n't go away for anything," I said, clinging to his coat. "Everybody hates me, I know it, but, for the Lord's sake, listen to me, defend me, or drive me out of the house! I cannot live with *him!* *He* is trying in every way to humiliate me, orders me to kneel in his presence, and wants to whip me. I cannot stand it. I am not a little child; I shall not live through it, I shall die; I will kill myself. *He* told grandmother that I was a good-for-nothing, and she is now ill, she will die through me, I — with — him — for the Lord's sake, whip me — — why — do they — tor—ment me?"

My tears choked me, I sat down on the divan, and, not being able to say anything more, fell with my head upon his knees and sobbed so much that I thought I was going to die that very minute.

"What are you weeping about, you round-cheeks?" said papa, sympathetically, as he leaned over me.

"*He* is my tyrant — tormentor — I shall die — nobody loves me!" I barely was able to utter, and I fell into convulsions.

Papa took me in his arms and carried me into the sleeping-room. I fell asleep.

When I awoke, it was very late, a candle was burning near my bed, and in the room sat our family doctor, Mimi, and Lyúbochka. I could see by their faces that they were afraid for my health. But I felt so well and light after a sleep of almost twelve hours that I should have leaped out of my bed, if it had not been so disagreeable for me to disturb their conviction that I was very ill.

XVII.

HATRED

YES, it was a real feeling of hatred, — not of that hatred of which we read in novels, and in which I do not believe, — not of that hatred which finds pleasure in doing a person some harm, but of that hatred which inspires you with an irresistible loathing for a person who, otherwise, deserves your respect, which makes you loathe his hair, his neck, his gait, the sound of his voice, all his members and all his motions, and, at the same time, attracts you to him by some incomprehensible power, and compels you with restless attention to follow every minutest act of his. I experienced this feeling for St. Jérôme.

St. Jérôme had been living in our house for a year and a half. When I now think coolly of the man, I find that he was a good Frenchman, but a Frenchman in the highest degree. He was not stupid, quite well educated, and conscientiously executed his duty toward us; but he was possessed of the characteristic traits of frivolous egotism, vanity, impudence, and ignorant self-confidence, which are common to all of his countrymen, and are diametrically opposed to the Russian character. All that I did not like. Of course, grandmother had explained to him her opinion in regard to corporal punishment, and he did not dare strike us; but, in spite of this, he often threatened us, especially me, with the rod, and pronounced the word *fouetter* (something like *fouatter*) so

disgustingly, and with such an intonation as if it would give him the greatest pleasure to whip me.

I was not in the least afraid of the pain of the punishment, though I had never experienced it, but the mere thought that St. Jérôme could strike me induced in me a heavy feeling of subdued despair and fury.

In moments of anger Karl Iványovich used to make his personal accounts with us by means of the ruler or suspenders, but I recall that without the least annoyance. Even if Karl Iványovich had struck me at that particular moment (when I was fourteen years old), I should have borne his blows with equanimity. I loved Karl Iványovich, remembered him as far back as I could remember myself, and was accustomed to regard him as a member of the family; but St. Jérôme was a haughty and self-satisfied man, for whom I felt nothing but that involuntary respect with which all grown people inspired me. Karl Iványovich was a funny old valet, whom I loved with all my soul, but whom I placed, nevertheless, below myself in my childish conception of social standing.

St. Jérôme, on the contrary, was an educated, fine-looking young dandy, who tried to stand on the same level with us.

Karl Iványovich used to scold and punish us with indifference; it was evident that he regarded it as a disagreeable, though necessary, duty. St. Jérôme, on the contrary, liked to pose as a tutor; it was evident that, when he punished us, he did so more for his own pleasure than for our good. He was carried away by his majesty. His high-flowing French phrases, which he pronounced with a strong accent on the last syllable, with circumflexes, were inexpressibly repulsive to me. When Karl Iványovich grew angry, he said: "Puppet show, vanton boy, Shampanish fly." St. Jérôme called us "*mauvais sujet, vilain garnement*," and so forth, giving me names which offended my self-esteem.

Karl Iványovich used to put us on our knees with face to the corner, and the punishment consisted in the physical pain which arose from such an attitude; St. Jérôme threw out his chest, made a majestic gesture with his hand, and cried, in a tragic voice: "*A genoux, mauvais sujet!*" and compelled us to get down on our knees with our faces turned toward him, and ask his forgiveness. The punishment consisted in humiliation.

I was not punished and nobody even mentioned what had happened to me; but I could not forget what despair, shame, and terror I had experienced in those two days. Although St. Jérôme ever since then gave me up and hardly paid any attention to me, I could not get accustomed to looking upon him with equanimity. Every time our eyes met by accident, I felt that my glance expressed too much apparent hatred, and I hastened to assume an expression of indifference; but when I thought he understood my simulation, I blushed and turned my face away altogether.

In short, it was inexpressibly hard for me to have any relations with him.

XVIII.

THE MAIDS' CHAMBER

I FELT more and more lonely, and my chief pleasures were solitary meditations and observations. I shall tell in the next chapter of the subject of my meditations; but the scene of my observations was preëminently the maids' chamber, where a pathetic romance took place, which interested me very much. The heroine of this romance, of course, was Másha. She was in love with Vasíli, who had known her when she was still at liberty, and who had promised to marry her. Fate, which had separated them five years before, had again brought them together in grandmother's house, but had placed a barrier to their mutual love in the person of Nikoláy, Másha's uncle, who would not listen to Másha's marrying Vasíli, whom he called a weak-brained and reckless man.

This barrier had the result that Vasíli, who heretofore had been cold and careless in his relations to Másha, now fell in love with her, and he fell in love as much as a man is capable of such a sentiment, when he has been a tailor in manorial service, wearing a rose-coloured blouse and waxing his hair with pomatum.

Although his manifestations of love were very strange and awkward (for example, whenever he met Másha he tried to cause her pain: either he pinched her, or struck her with the palm of his hand, or squeezed her with such power that she scarcely could draw breath), his love was sincere, which is proved even by this, that from the very

time when Nikoláy had definitely refused him the hand of his niece, he had gone on a protracted spree from sorrow, and frequented inns and was riotous in his behaviour, — in short, he acted so outrageously that he often was subjected to humiliating punishments at the police station. But these actions of his and their consequences seemed to constitute a special merit in Másha's eyes, and only increased her love for him. Whenever Vasíli was retained in the lockup, Másha cried for days at a time and did not dry her tears; she complained of her bitter fate to Gásha, who took a lively part in the affairs of the unfortunate lovers, and paying no attention to her uncle's scolding and beating, she stealthily ran to the police station to visit and comfort her friend.

Reader, do not look with contempt upon the society to which I am introducing you! If the strings of love and sympathy have not slackened in your souls, you will find sounds in the maids' chamber to which they will respond. Whether you like to follow me or not, I betake myself to the landing on the staircase, from which I can see everything that takes place in the room. There is the oven-bench, upon which stands a flat-iron, a papier-maché doll with a broken nose, a wash-basin, and a pitcher; there is the window, upon which lies in disorder a bit of black wax, a skein of silk, a half-eaten green cucumber and a candy box; there is a large red table, upon which a chintz-covered brick is placed over a new piece of sewing.

It was here that Másha sat, wearing my favourite, rose-coloured gingham dress and blue kerchief, which particularly attracted my attention. She was sewing, and stopped, now and then, to scratch her head with the needle, or to fix the candle. I looked at her and thought: Why was she not born a lady with those bright blue eyes, immense auburn braid and high breast? How well she would look in a sitting-room in a cap with rose-coloured ribbons and in a crimson capote, not such as Mimi

had, but such as I had seen in the Tver Boulevard. She would be working at the embroidery-frame, and I should be looking at her in the mirror, and I should give her anything she might ask for, hand her her cloak, and myself serve her her food.

What a drunken face and repulsive figure that Vasíli had, in his tight coat which he wore over his dirty rose-coloured blouse! In every motion of his, in every curvature of his back, I thought I read the undoubted signs of the disgusting punishment which had befallen him.

"What, Vásya, again?" said Másha, sticking her needle into the cushion, and without raising her head to meet Vasíli, who was just entering.

"Well, what good will come from him?" answered Vasíli. "If he'd only make his mind up one way or the other! As it is, I am ruined, and all on his account!"

"Will you drink tea?" said Nadézhda, another chambermaid.

"Thank you very much. What does that thief, your uncle, hate me for? For having a decent suit, for my bearing, for my gait? In short — the deuce!" Vasíli concluded, waving his hand.

"You must be submissive," said Másha, biting off a thread, "but you, on the contrary — "

"My patience has given out, that's what!"

Just then a door was heard slamming in grandmother's room, and the gruff voice of Gásha, who was walking up the stairs.

"Go and please her, when she does not know herself what she wants — it is an accursed life, a prisoner's life! If only the Lord will forgive my sin," she grumbled, waving her arms.

"My respects to Agáfya Mikháylovna!" said Vasíli, rising in his seat, as she entered.

"You here again! I have other things to think of besides your respects," she answered, looking threateningly

at him. "Why are you coming here? Is it proper for a man to come to girls' rooms?"

"I wanted to find out about your health," timidly said Vasíli.

"I'll bite the dust soon, that's the way of my health!" angrily cried Agáfya Mikháylovna at the top of her voice.

Vasíli laughed.

"There is nothing to laugh about, and when I tell you to get out, go! I declare, that heathen, that rascal wants to marry! Now, march, get out!"

Agáfya Mikháylovna stamped her foot and went to her room, slamming the door with such force that the window-panes shook.

One could hear her behind the partition for a long time, flinging about her things and pulling the ears of her favourite cat, while scolding everybody and everything, and cursing her life; finally the door was opened, and the cat, mewing pitifully, was whirled out by her tail.

"I see I had better come some other time to take a glass of tea," said Vasíli in a whisper. "Good-bye till the next pleasant meeting!"

"Never mind," said Nadézhda, winking, "I shall go and look after the samovár."

"I will make an end of it," continued Vasíli, seating himself nearer to Másha, the moment Nadézhda left the room. "Either I'll go straight to the countess, and will say: 'It is so and so,' or I'll throw everything away, and, upon my word, will run away to the end of the world."

"And I shall remain —"

"It is you alone I am sorry for, or else my head would long ago have been in the free world, upon my word, upon my word."

"Vasíli, why don't you bring me your blouses to get them washed," said Másha, after a minute's silence, "for just see how black it is," she added, taking hold of the collar of his blouse.

Just then grandmother's bell was heard down-stairs, and Gásha came out of her room.

"Well, rascal, what do you want of her?" she said, pushing Vasíli out of the door, who got up in haste, when he saw her. "This is what you have brought her to, and now you annoy her. You beggar, you evidently take delight in looking at her tears. Get out! Let not your breath be here again! And what good thing have you found in him?" she continued, turning to Másha. "Has your uncle not beaten you enough to-day? No, you stick to it: 'I sha'n't marry anybody but Vasíli Grúskov!' Fool!"

"Yes, and I will not marry anybody, I will not love anybody, even though you kill me," said Másha, suddenly bursting into tears.

For a long time I looked at Másha, who lay on a trunk and wiped her tears with her kerchief. I endeavoured to get rid of my idea of Vasíli, and to find that point of view from which he could appear so attractive to her. Yet, though I sincerely sympathized with her grief, I was unable to comprehend how such a charming being as Másha seemed to be in my eyes, could love Vasíli.

"When I am grown up," I discoursed to myself, after I had returned to my room, "the Petróvskoe estate will go to me, and Vasíli and Másha will be my serfs. I shall be sitting in my cabinet and smoking a pipe. Másha will pass to the kitchen with a flat-iron. I shall say, 'Call Másha!' She will come, and nobody will be in the room. Suddenly Vasíli will enter, and, seeing Másha, he will say: 'I am a ruined man!' and Másha, too, will burst out weeping, and I shall say: 'Vasíli, I know that you love her, and that she loves you. Here, take one thousand roubles, marry her, and God grant you happiness!' and I shall myself go into the sofa-room."

Among the endless number of thoughts and dreams that tracklessly cross the mind and the imagination,

there are some that leave a deep, pronounced furrow behind them; so that frequently one remembers, without remembering the essence of the thought, that something good has been in the head, one feels the traces of the thought, and tries to reproduce it. Such a deep trace was left in my soul by the thought of sacrificing my feeling in favour of Másha's happiness, which she could find only in her marriage with Vasíli.

XIX.

BOYHOOD

PEOPLE will hardly believe what the favourite and most constant subjects of my thoughts were during the period of my boyhood, — for they were incompatible with my age and station. But, according to my opinion, the incompatibility between a man's position and his moral activity is the safest token of truth.

In the course of the year, during which I led a solitary, concentrated moral life, all abstract thoughts of man's destiny, of the future life, of the immortality of the soul presented themselves to my mind, and my weak childish reason tried with all the fervour of inexperience to elucidate those questions, whose proposition marks the highest degree the human mind can reach, but the solution of which is not given to it.

It seems to me that the human mind in its evolution passes in every separate individual over the same path on which it evolves during whole generations; that the ideas which have served for the basis of distinct philosophical theories form inseparable parts of mind; and that every man has more or less clearly been conscious of them long before he knew of the existence of philosophical theories.

These ideas presented themselves to my mind with such clearness and precision that I even tried to apply them to life, imagining that I was the first who had discovered such great and useful truths.

At one time it occurred to me that happiness did not

depend on external causes, but on our relation to them; that a man who is accustomed to bear suffering could not be unhappy. To accustom myself to endurance, I would hold for five minutes at a time the dictionaries of Tatíshchev in my outstretched hands, though that caused me unspeakable pain, or I would go into the lumber-room and strike my bare back so painfully with a rope that the tears would involuntarily appear in my eyes.

At another time, I happened to think that death awaited me at any hour and at any minute, and wondering how it was people had not seen this before me, I decided that man cannot be happy otherwise than by enjoying the present and not caring for the future. Under the influence of this thought, I abandoned my lessons for two or three days, and did nothing but lie on my bed and enjoy myself reading some novel and eating honey cakes which I bought with my last money.

At another time, as I was standing at the blackboard and drawing various figures upon it with a piece of chalk, I was suddenly struck by the idea: Why is symmetry pleasant to the eye? What is symmetry? It is an implanted feeling, I answered myself. What is it based upon? Is symmetry to be found in everything in life? Not at all. Here is life, — and I drew an oval figure on the board. After life the soul passes into eternity; here is eternity, — and I drew, on one side of the figure, a line to the very edge of the board. Why is there no such line on the other side of the figure? Really, what kind of an eternity is that which is only on one side? We have no doubt existed before this life, although we have lost the recollection of it.

This consideration, which then appeared extremely novel and clear to me, but the connection of which I can barely make out now, gave me extreme pleasure, and I took a sheet of paper and intended to put my idea down in writing; but such a mass of ideas suddenly burst upon

me that I was compelled to get up and walk about the room. As I walked up to the window, my attention was drawn to the horse which a driver was hitching to a water-cart, and all my thoughts centred on the solution of the question, into what animal or man the soul of that horse would pass after her death. Just then Volódya crossed the room and, seeing that I was deep in thought, smiled. This smile was enough to make me understand that all I had been thinking about was the merest bosh.

I have told this memorable incident only to give the reader an idea what my reasonings were like.

By none of these philosophical considerations was I so carried away as by scepticism, which at one time led me to a condition bordering on insanity. I imagined that nothing existed in the whole world outside of me, that objects were no objects, but only images which appeared whenever I turned my attention to them, and that these images would immediately disappear when I no longer thought of them. In short, I held the conviction with Schelling that objects do not exist, but only my relation to them. There were moments when, under the influence of this fixed idea, I reached such a degree of absurdity that I sometimes suddenly turned in the opposite direction, hoping to take nothingness by surprise, where I was not.

What a miserable, insignificant mainspring of moral activities the human mind is!

My feeble reason could not penetrate the impenetrable, and in the labour which transcended its power, I lost, one after another, those convictions which, for the happiness of my life, I ought never to have presumed to touch.

From all that heavy moral labour I carried away nothing but agility of mind, which weakened my will-power, and a habit of constant moral analysis, which destroyed the freshness of my feeling and the clearness of my understanding.

Abstract ideas are formed in consequence of a man's ability to grasp, consciously, the condition of his soul at a certain moment, and to transfer it to his memory. My inclination for abstract reasonings so unnaturally developed my consciousness that frequently, when I began to think of the simplest thing, I fell into the inextricable circle of the analysis of my thoughts, and I no longer thought of the question which occupied my attention, but I thought of the fact that I thought. If I asked myself: Of what am I thinking? I answered: I am thinking of thinking. And what am I thinking of now? I am thinking of thinking that I am thinking, and so on. Reason was lost in empty speculation.

However, the philosophical discoveries which I made flattered my vanity very much: I frequently imagined myself a great man who was discoverimg new truths for the good of mankind, and I looked upon all other mortals with a proud consciousness of my dignity. But, strange to say, whenever I came in contact with these mortals, I grew timid, and the higher I placed myself in my own opinion, the less I was able to express the consciousness of my own dignity before others, and could not even get accustomed to not being ashamed of every simplest word and motion of mine.

XX.

VOLÓDYA

YES, the farther I advance in the description of this period of my life, the harder and the more painful it is getting for me. Among the memories of this time I rarely, very rarely, find those moments of genuine, warm feeling, which so brilliantly and constantly illuminated the beginning of my life. I involuntarily want to run through the desert of my boyhood as fast as possible, and to reach that happy period, when the truly tender and noble feeling of friendship again brightly illuminated the end of that age, and laid the foundation for the new period of youth, full of poetry and charm.

I shall not follow my memories hourly, but shall cast a rapid glance at the most important events from the time to which I have brought my narrative up to the time of my association with an unusual man who had a definite and beneficent influence upon my character and thought.

Volódya was on the point of entering the university. He had separate teachers, and I listened with envy and involuntary awe when he, tapping the chalk on the blackboard, talked of functions, sinuses, coördinates, and so on, which seemed to me to be the expressions of an inaccessible wisdom. One Sunday, after dinner, all the teachers and two professors assembled in grandmother's room, and in presence of some invited guests rehearsed a university examination, at which rehearsal Volódya, to grandmother's

great delight, showed unusual knowledge. They also asked me some questions in a few subjects, but I made a very poor showing, and the professors were evidently anxious to conceal my ignorance from grandmother, which confused me even more. However, they paid little attention to me; I was only fifteen years old, and I had another year yet till my examination. Volódya came down-stairs only for dinner, and passed his whole days and even evenings up-stairs studying, not because he was compelled to do so, but from his own choice. He was very vain, and did not wish to pass a mediocre, but an excellent examination.

At last the day for the first examination arrived. Volódya put on a blue dress coat with brass buttons, a gold watch, and lacquered boots. Papa's phaeton drove up to the porch, Nikoláy threw back the boot, and Volódya and St. Jérôme drove to the university. The girls, especially Kátenka, with joyful and ecstatic countenances, looked through the window at the stately figure of Volódya, as he seated himself in the carriage, and papa said: "God grant it, God grant it!" and grandmother, who had also dragged herself to the window, with tears in her eyes made the sign of the cross at Volódya until the phaeton was lost around the corner of the street, and even after that continued murmuring something.

Volódya returned. All impatiently asked him: "Well? Was it all right? How much did you get?" It was, however, evident from his looks that everything had gone well. Volódya had received a five mark. On the next day he was seen off with the same wishes for success and with anxiety, and he was met with the same impatience and joy. Thus nine days passed. On the tenth day was to be the last, the most difficult examination, in religion. All stood at the window, and awaited him with even greater impatience. It was two o'clock, and Volódya had not yet returned.

"O Lord! Dear me! It is they! they!" cried Lyúbochka, pressing against the window.

And there, in reality, side by side with St. Jérôme, sat Volódya, but no longer in the blue dress coat and gray cap, but in a student's uniform with a hand-sewn blue collar, three-cornered hat, and gilt short sword at his side.

"Oh, if you were alive!" cried grandmother, when she saw Volódya in his uniform, and fell into a swoon.

Volódya ran into the antechamber with a beaming face and kissed and embraced me, Lyúbochka, Mimi, and Kátenka, who blushed up to her ears. Volódya was beside himself with joy. And how well he looked in that uniform! How becoming his blue collar was to his sprouting black moustache! What a long, thin waist and noble carriage he had!

On that memorable day all dined in grandmother's room. Joy was in the faces of all, and at dinner, during dessert, a servant, with an adequately majestic, yet merry countenance, brought a bottle of champagne, wrapped in a napkin. Grandmother, for the first time after mother's death, drank champagne, emptying a whole glass as she congratulated Volódya, and again wept for joy, looking at him.

Volódya after that drove out alone, in his own carriage, received his own acquaintances, smoked, and drove to balls; and I myself once saw him drink two bottles of champagne with his acquaintances in his room, while with every glass they drank the health of some mysterious persons, and discussed who would get *le fond de la bouteille*. Yet he dined regularly at home, and after dinner sat down, as formerly, in the sofa-room, and always mysteriously chatted with Kátenka about something. As much as I could make out, without taking part in their conversations, they were talking about the heroes and heroines of novels they had read, about jealousy, and

love, and I could not understand what interest they could find in such discussions, nor why they smiled so gently and discussed so fervently.

I noticed in general that between Kátenka and Volódya there existed, in addition to the natural friendship between companions of childhood, some other strange relation, which removed them from us, and mysteriously bound them together.

XXI.

KÁTENKA AND LYÚBOCHKA

KÁTENKA was sixteen years old. She was tall; her angularity of form, her bashfulness and awkwardness of movement, which are peculiar to a girl in her transitional age, had given way to the harmonious freshness and gracefulness of a newly budded flower; but she had not changed. The same light blue eyes and smiling countenance; the same straight nose, with its strong nostrils, forming almost a line with her forehead, and her little mouth with its bright smile; the same tiny dimples on her transparent rosy cheeks; the same little white hands, — and, for some reason, her former name of a "clean" girl remarkably fitted her even then. The only new things were her thick blond braid, which she wore like grown young ladies, and her young breast, the appearance of which visibly pleased and shamed her.

Though Lyúbochka had grown up and had been educated together with her, she was in every respect a different girl. Lyúbochka was not tall in stature, and she was bow-legged from early rickets, and had a badly shaped waist. In her whole figure nothing was beautiful but her eyes, and her eyes were beautiful indeed; they were large and black, and had such an irresistibly pleasant expression of dignity and naïveté that they invariably arrested the attention. Lyúbochka was simple and natural in everything, while Kátenka, so it seemed, always tried to resemble somebody. Lyúbochka always looked

straight at you, and, at times, when she fixed her immense black eyes on a person, she did not take them away for so long, that she was scolded for being impolite; Kátenka, on the contrary, lowered her eyelashes, blinked, and assured people that she was near-sighted, while I knew very well that she had good eyesight.

Lyúbochka did not like to be demonstrative in the presence of strangers, and when some one began to kiss her before guests, she pouted and said that she could not bear "tenderness." Kátenka, on the other hand, grew particularly affectionate to Mimi, whenever guests were about, and was fond of walking up and down the parlour with her arms about some girl. Lyúbochka was a terrible giggler, and often, when in a fit of laughter, waved her arms and ran up and down the room; Kátenka, on the contrary, covered her mouth with a handkerchief or with her hand, whenever she began to laugh. Lyúbochka always sat straight, and walked with her arms hanging down; Kátenka held her head a little on one side, and walked with her arms folded.

Lyúbochka was always exceedingly happy whenever she had a chance to talk to a very tall man, and she used to say that she would marry nobody but a hussar; Kátenka, however, said that all men were equally distasteful to her and that she would never marry, and she acted, every time she spoke with a man, like an entirely different person, as though she was afraid of something. Lyúbochka always quarrelled with Mimi for lacing her corsets so tightly that it was impossible to breathe, and was fond of something good to eat; Kátenka, on the contrary, frequently put her finger under the band of her skirt, to show us how loose it was, and she ate very little. Lyúbochka was fond of drawing heads, while Kátenka drew only flowers and butterflies. Lyúbochka played with great clearness Field's concerts and a few sonatas of Beethoven; Kátenka played variations and waltzes, re-

tarded the tempo, banged, continually took the pedal, and, before starting out to play, feelingly took three chords *arpeggio*.

But Kátenka, as I then used to think, resembled a grown woman more, and therefore she pleased me more.

XXII.

PAPA

PAPA had been unusually happy ever since Volódya entered the university, and came more frequently than was his custom to dine with grandmother. However, his happiness, as I found out from Nikoláy, was caused by his unusually great winnings. It even happened that he came to see us in the evening, before going to his club; he then seated himself at the piano, gathered us all about him, and, tapping with his soft boots (he could not bear heels, which he never wore), sang gipsy songs. It was then a sight to see the ridiculous ecstasy of his favourite, Lyúbochka, who simply worshipped him. At times he came to the class-room and listened with austere face to the recital of my lessons, but by the few words which he employed in order to correct me I noticed that he did not know the subjects well in which I was being instructed. At times he stealthily winked at us and made signs to us, when grandmother began to growl and scold everybody without cause. "Well, we did catch it, children!" he would say afterward. In general, he came down in my opinion, from that inaccessible height where my childish imagination had placed him. I kissed his large white hand with the same genuine feeling of love and respect, but I took the liberty of deliberating about him, and judging his acts, and I was involuntarily surprised by thoughts that frightened me. I shall never forget the

occasion that inspired me with many such thoughts and afforded me much moral suffering.

Late one evening he entered the sitting-room in his black dress coat and white vest, to take Volódya, who was dressing at that time in his room, to a ball. Grandmother was waiting in her chamber for Volódya to appear before her, for she was in the habit of calling him up before every ball, to bless him, look him over, and give him instructions. In the parlour, which was lighted only by one lamp, Mimi and Kátenka paced up and down, while Lyúbochka sat at the piano and studied Field's second concert, mamma's favourite piece.

I have never seen such a family resemblance as existed between sister and mother. This resemblance did not consist in the face, nor in the whole figure, but in something intangible: in the hands, in the manner of walking, but especially in the voice and in certain expressions. When Lyúbochka was angry and said: "They keep me my whole life," she pronounced these words "my whole life," which mamma, too, was in the habit of using, in such a manner, somewhat protracted, like "my who-o-le life," that I thought I heard mamma; but most striking was the resemblance in her playing, and in all her attitudes at the piano: she arranged her dress in the same way, in the same way turned the pages with her left hand, in the same way struck the keys with her fist, when she was angry because she did not succeed in playing smoothly a difficult passage, and said: "O Lord," and there was the same inimitable tenderness and clearness of expression, that beautiful expression of Field's, which is so appropriately called *jeu perlé*, the charm of which all the hocus-pocus of the modern pianists has not been able to obliterate.

Papa entered the room with rapid, mincing steps, and walked up to Lyúbochka, who stopped playing the moment she noticed him.

"No, keep on, Lyúbochka, keep on!" he said, seating her on the stool, "you know how I like to hear you."

Lyúbochka continued to play, and papa sat long opposite her, leaning on his arm; then he suddenly jerked his shoulder, rose from his chair, and began to pace the room. Every time he came near the piano, he stopped and gazed long and fixedly at Lyúbochka. I observed by his movements and gait that he was agitated. After crossing the parlour several times, he stopped behind Lyúbochka's seat and kissed her black hair, then he rapidly turned about, and continued to pace the room. When Lyúbochka had finished her playing and walked up to him with the question: "Was it all right?" he silently took her head and began to kiss her brow and eyes with a tenderness I had never seen in him before.

"O Lord, you are weeping!" suddenly said Lyúbochka, letting the chain of his watch slip out of her hands, and fixing her large, wondering eyes upon his face. "Forgive me, darling father, I forgot entirely that it was mother's piece."

"Not at all, my dear girl, play it often," he said in a voice quivering with emotion; "if you only knew how much good it does me to weep with you!"

He kissed her once more and, trying to overcome his inward agitation, went, with a jerk of his shoulder, through the door that led over the corridor to Volódya's room.

"Vóldemar! Shall you be ready soon?" he called out, stopping in the middle of the corridor. Just then chambermaid Másha passed by him. When she saw her master, she lowered her eyes and wanted to make a circuit round him. He stopped her. "You are getting prettier all the time," he said, leaning down to her.

Másha blushed, and lowered her head still more. "Allow me," she whispered.

"Vóldemar, will it be long?" papa repeated, shrugging

his shoulder and coughing, when Másha had passed by him, and he saw me.

I loved my father, but a man's mind lives independently from his heart, and frequently harbours incomprehensible and cruel thoughts which offend his feelings. Such thoughts came to me, though I endeavoured to remove them.

XXIII.

GRANDMOTHER

GRANDMOTHER grew weaker from day to day. Her bell, the voice of gruff Gásha, and the slamming of the doors were heard with increasing frequency in her room, and she no longer received us in her cabinet, seated in her armchair, but in her chamber, lying upon a high bed with lace-covered pillows. When I greeted her, I noticed a light yellow shining swelling on her hand, and in the room was a heavy odour, such as I had smelled five years before in mother's room. The doctor called upon her three times a day, and several consultations had taken place. But her character, her proud, ceremonious treatment of all the people of the house, especially of papa, had not changed in the least. She stretched her words as before, and raised her brows and said: "My dear!"

We had not been admitted to her presence for several days, when one morning St. Jérôme proposed to me during class hours that I should go out driving with Lyúbochka and Kátenka. Though, while seating myself in the sleigh, I noticed that the street was covered with straw under grandmother's windows, and that some strange people in blue cloaks were standing near our gate, I could not make out why we were sent out driving at such an inauspicious hour. On that day, and during the drive, Lyúbochka and I were, for some reason, in that unusually happy frame of mind when every incident, every word, every motion caused us to laugh.

A peddler trotted across the road clutching his tray, — and we laughed. A ragged Jehu, waving the ends of his lines, in a gallop caught up with our sleigh, — and we laughed. Filípp's whip caught in the runner of the sleigh; he turned around and called out, "The deuce!" and we roared with laughter. Mimi said, with a dissatisfied look, that only stupid people laughed without cause, and Lyúbochka, red with exertion from a subdued laugh, looked at me stealthily. Our eyes met, and we burst into such a Homeric laugh, that tears stood in our eyes, and we were unable to restrain the torrent of laughter which was choking us. No sooner had we quieted down a little, than I looked at Lyúbochka and pronounced the secret word which had been current among us for some time and which invariably produced laughter, and we roared again.

Just as we were reaching home, I opened my mouth to make a face at Lyúbochka, when my eyes were struck by the lid of a black coffin, which was leaning against the wing of the entrance door, and my mouth remained in its contorted position.

"*Votre grand'mère est morte!*" said St. Jérôme with a pale face, coming out to meet us.

During all the time that grandmother's body remained in the house, I experienced the heavy feeling of the terror of death; that is, the dead body vividly and unpleasantly reminded me of the fact that I should die some day, — a feeling which, for some reason, is confounded with grief. I did not regret grandmother, and I doubt if any one sincerely regretted her. Though the house was full of mourning visitors, nobody regretted her death, except one person, whose unbounded grief amazed me inexpressibly. That person was chambermaid Gásha. She went to the garret, locked herself up there, and, without ceasing to weep, cursed herself, tore her hair, would not listen to any consolation, and kept on saying that her own death would

be her only consolation after the death of her beloved mistress.

I again repeat that improbability in matters of feeling is the surest token of truth.

Grandmother was no more, but the memories of her and the various discussions about her were still living in our house. These discussions referred especially to the will which she had made before her demise, and which nobody knew, except her executor, Prince Iván Ivánovich. I noticed a certain agitation among the servants of grandmother, and there were frequent conversations about what each could expect, and, I must confess, I involuntarily thought with pleasure of our getting an inheritance.

Six weeks later, Nikoláy — the daily gazette of the news of our house — told me that grandmother had left her whole estate to Lyúbochka, leaving the guardianship up to her marriage not to papa, but to Prince Iván Ivánovich.

XXIV.

I

But a few months were left before my entering the university. I studied well. I not only waited for my teachers without fear, but even experienced a certain pleasure in my class work.

I felt happy whenever I recited my lesson clearly and distinctly. I was preparing for the mathematical faculty; which selection, to tell the truth, I made only because the words sinus, tangent, differential, integral, and so on, pleased me very much.

I was much smaller than Volódya, broad-shouldered and flabby, and as homely as ever, which worried me, as before. I tried to appear original. One thing consoled me: namely, that papa had said about me that I had a "clever phiz," and I firmly believed it.

St. Jérôme was satisfied with me and praised me, and I not only did not hate him, but it even seemed to me that I loved him when he said that with my ability, with my mind, it would be a shame if I did not accomplish this or that.

My observations in the maids' chamber had ceased long ago, for I felt ashamed to conceal myself behind the door, and, besides, my conviction of Másha's and Vasíli's love had, I must say, somewhat cooled me off. I was completely cured of this unfortunate passion by Vasíli's marriage, for which, at Vasíli's request, I asked papa's permission.

When the newly married couple came, with candy on a tray, to thank papa, and when Másha, in a cap with blue ribbons, thanked us all for something, kissing each of us on the shoulder, I smelled only the perfume of rose pomatum on her hair, and did not feel the least emotion.

I began to be cured altogether of my boyish faults, except the chief fault, which was to cause me no end of trouble in my life, — the tendency to philosophize.

XXV.

VOLÓDYA'S FRIENDS

ALTHOUGH I played in the company of Volódya's acquaintances a part which offended my vanity, I liked to sit in his room, when he had guests, and in silence to observe everything that took place there. His most frequent visitors were Adjutant Dubkóv and Prince Nekhlyúdov, a student. Dubkóv, who had passed his first youth, was a small, muscular fellow, of dark complexion. He had rather short legs, but was not bad-looking, and was always jolly. He was one of those narrow-minded men who please on account of their very narrow-mindedness, who are not able to see objects from various sides, and who are eternally carried away by something. The reasoning of such people is one-sided and faulty, but always open-hearted and persuasive. Even their narrow egotism somehow appears pardonable and attractive. In addition, Dubkóv had a double charm for Volódya and me, that of his military appearance and, chiefly, of age, which young people are in the habit of mistaking for decency (*comme il faut*), which is highly valued in these years. And, indeed, Dubkóv was what one calls "*un homme comme il faut.*" One thing displeased me, and that was that Volódya seemed to be ashamed before him for all my innocent acts, but more especially for my youth.

Nekhlyúdov was not good-looking: his small, gray eyes, low, straight forehead, disproportionate arms and legs

could not be regarded as beautiful features. His redeeming features were his very tall stature, soft complexion, and beautiful teeth. But his face assumed such an original and energetic character from his narrow, glistening eyes and changeable, now severe, now childishly indefinite smile, that one could not fail to take notice of him.

He seemed to be very bashful, because every trifle made him blush to his ears; but his bashfulness was different from mine. The more he blushed, the more determination his face expressed, as though he was angry at his own weakness.

Though he appeared to be very friendly with Dubkóv and Volódya, it was evident that only chance had brought them together. Their views were quite different: Dubkóv and Volódya avoided everything that resembled serious discussion and sentimentality; Nekhlyúdov, on the contrary, was an enthusiast in the highest degree, and in spite of ridicule, often entered into the discussion of philosophical questions and of sentiments. Volódya and Dubkóv were fond of talking of the objects of their love (they were generally in love with several women at the same time and both with the same woman); Nekhlyúdov, on the contrary, was always seriously angry when they hinted of his love for a red-haired girl.

Volódya and Dubkóv often allowed themselves to speak lightly of their relatives; Nekhlyúdov, on the contrary, was beside himself with anger at any unfavourable reference to his aunt, for whom he felt an ecstatic adoration. Volódya and Dubkóv drove away after supper without Nekhlyúdov, whom they called a "blushing maiden."

I was struck from the start by Nekhlyúdov, both on account of his conversation and his looks. Yet, in spite of the fact that I found many common points in our views, or, maybe, on account of it, — the feeling with which he inspired me when I first saw him was far from friendly.

I did not like his rapid glance, firm voice, haughty mien, but, above all, the complete indifference which he showed me. I often felt dreadfully like contradicting him, when he was talking; I wished to dispute with him, to punish him for his haughtiness, and to prove to him that I was sensible, even though he did not wish to pay the least attention to me. My bashfulness kept me back.

XXVI.

REFLECTIONS

VOLÓDYA was lying with his feet on a sofa, and leaning on his arm, was reading some French novel, when I, after my evening classes, entered his room, as usual. He lifted his head for a second to look at me, and again turned to his reading, — a very simple and natural movement, but it made me blush. It seemed to me that in his glance was expressed the question why I had come there, and that in the rapid inclination of his head was manifested a desire of concealing from me the meaning of that glance. This tendency to give a meaning to the simplest motion was a characteristic of mine at that period. I went up to the table and picked up a book; but before I began to read it, it occurred to me that it was too ridiculous that, not having seen each other for a whole day, we should exchange no words.

"Shall you be at home this evening?"

"I do not know. Why?"

"Nothing," I said, and noticing that there was a hitch in the conversation, I took the book and began to read.

Oddly enough, Volódya and I passed whole hours in silence, when face to face with each other, but the presence of a third, even silent, person, was sufficient to make us enter into most interesting and varied conversations. We felt that we knew each other too well, and to know each other too much or too little is equally unfavourable for a close communion.

"Is Volódya at home?" was heard Dubkóv's voice in the antechamber.

"Yes," said Volódya, taking down his legs and placing his book on the table.

Dubkóv and Nekhlyúdov, dressed in their overcoats and hats, entered the room.

"Well, Volódya, shall we drive to the theatre?"

"No, I have no time," said Volódya, blushing.

"Don't say that! Come, let us go!"

"I have not even a ticket."

"You may get all the tickets you want at the entrance."

"Wait, I shall be back in a moment," Volódya said evasively, and, jerking his shoulder, left the room.

I knew that Volódya wanted very much to go to the theatre, to which Dubkóv had invited him, that he declined only because he had no money, and that he went out to borrow five roubles of the steward against his next allowance.

"Good evening, diplomat!" Dubkóv said to me, giving me his hand.

Volódya's friends called me diplomat, because once at dinner grandmother, who was talking of our future, said, in their presence, that Volódya would be a soldier, and that she hoped to see me in the diplomatic service in a black dress coat and with my hair combed *à la coq*, which, in her opinion, were the necessary conditions for a diplomatic calling.

"Where has Volódya gone?" Nekhlyúdov asked me.

"I do not know," I answered, blushing at the thought that they, no doubt, guessed the cause of Volódya's leaving.

"I suppose he has no money. Am I right? O diplomat!" he added affirmatively, as he explained my smile. "I have not any money, either. And have you any, Dubkóv?"

"Let us see," said Dubkóv, taking out his purse and very carefully feeling a few small coins with his short

fingers. "Here is a five-kopek piece, here is a twenty-kopek piece, and then fffu!" he said, making a comic gesture with his hand.

Volódya entered the room.

"Well, are we going?"

"No."

"How funny you are!" said Nekhlyúdov. "Why did you not tell us that you had no money? Take my ticket if you wish!"

"And how about you?"

"He will go to the box of his cousins," said Dubkóv.

"No, I shall not go at all."

"Why?"

"Because, as you know, I do not like to stay in a box."

"Why?"

"I do not like it; I do not feel at ease."

"The old story! I can't understand why you should feel ill at ease, where everybody likes to see you. It is ridiculous, *mon cher*."

"What is to be done, *si je suis timide?* I am sure you have never blushed in all your life, but I do, for the merest trifle!" he said, blushing.

"*Savez vous d'où vient votre timidité? D'un excès d'amour propre, mon cher*," said Dubkóv, in a condescending tone.

"Where does the *excès d'amour propre* come in?" answered Nekhlyúdov, touched to the quick. "On the contrary, I am timid because I have too little *amour propre;* it always seems to me that people must feel tired and annoyed in my presence — that's why."

"Dress yourself, Volódya!" said Dubkóv, taking him by his shoulder, and pulling off his coat. "Ignát, your master wants to dress!"

"That's why I often feel —" continued Nekhlyúdov.

But Dubkóv did not listen to him. "Tra-la-ta-ra-ra-la-la," he sang out some air.

"You can't get rid of me," said Nekhlyúdov. "I'll prove to you that bashfulness originates from anything but egoism."

"You may prove it when we are out driving."

"I told you I was not going with you."

"Well, then, stay here and prove it to the diplomat; he will tell it to us when we return."

"I will prove it," replied Nekhlyúdov with childish stubbornness, "only come back as soon as possible."

"Do you think I am egoistic?" he said, sitting down near me.

Although I had made up my mind in regard to this, I became so timid from this sudden question that it was some time before I could answer him.

"I think you are," I said, feeling my voice tremble, and my face flush at the thought that the time had come to prove to him that I was a man of sense. "I think that every man is egoistic, and that all a man does he does through egoism."

"What, then, in your opinion, is egoism?" said Nekhlyúdov, smiling rather contemptuously, as I thought.

"Egoism," I said, "is the conviction that I am better and wiser than all men."

"But how can all be convinced of this?"

"I do not know whether it is just or not, only nobody acknowledges it but me. I am convinced that I am wiser than anybody in the world, and I am convinced that you, too, have the same conviction as regards yourself."

"No, I must say for my own part that I have met people whom I have acknowledged to be wiser than I am," said Nekhlyúdov.

"It is impossible," I answered with conviction.

"Do you really think so?" said Nekhlyúdov, looking fixedly at me.

"In all earnest," I answered.

And suddenly a thought struck me, which I at once

expressed: "I shall prove it to you. Why do we love ourselves more than others? Because we regard ourselves better than others, and more worthy of love. If we found others to be better than we are, we should love them better than ourselves, but this never happens. And if it does happen, I am still right," I added with an involuntary smile of self-satisfaction.

Nekhlyúdov was silent for moment.

"I never imagined you were such a clever fellow!" he said to me, with so kindly, good-hearted a smile that it suddenly seemed to me that I was exceedingly happy.

Praise acts so powerfully not only on the feelings, but also on the reason of a man, that under its pleasant influence I thought that I had become much wiser, and ideas one after another crowded into my head with unusual rapidity. From egoism we passed to love, and the conversation upon that theme seemed inexhaustible. Though to an outsider these reflections might have appeared as the merest rubbish, — they were so obscure and one-sided, — they were of high importance to us. Our souls were attuned in the same key, so that the least touch of any one string found an echo in the other. We had pleasure in this very responsiveness of the various strings which we touched in our conversation. It seemed to us that we lacked words and time to express to each other our thoughts, that begged for recognition.

XXVII.

THE BEGINNING OF THE FRIENDSHIP

SINCE then sufficiently strange, but exceedingly pleasant relations established themselves between me and Dmítri Nekhlyúdov. In the presence of other people he paid almost no attention to me; but the moment we happened to be alone, we seated ourselves in a cosy corner, and began to philosophize, forgetting everything and not noticing how time flew.

We discussed the future life, art, government service, marriage, education of children, and it never occurred to us that all we were saying was the most terrible nonsense. This did not occur to us, because the nonsense we were talking was wise and agreeable nonsense; and in youth we still value reason, and believe in it. In youth all the powers of the soul are directed to the future, and this future assumes, under the influence of hope, which is based, not on the experience of the past, but on an imaginary possibility of happiness, such varied, living, and enchanting forms, that the mere conceived and imparted dreams of a future happiness constitute the genuine happiness of that age. In the metaphysical discussions, which formed one of the chief subjects of our conversations, I liked that minute when the thoughts followed each other faster and faster and, becoming ever more abstract, finally reached such a degree of mistiness that I no longer saw any possibility of expressing them, and, trying to say what I thought, said something entirely different. I liked that

minute when, rising ever higher in the sphere of thought, I suddenly grasped all its immeasurableness, and became conscious of the impossibility of going any farther.

Once, during the Butter-Week, Nekhlyúdov was so busy with all kinds of pleasures that, though he called several times a day at our house, he did not once speak to me, and this so offended me that I again thought of him as a haughty and disagreeable man. I only waited for an opportunity to show him that I did not in the least value his society, and did not have any particular attachment for him.

When he wanted to talk to me for the first time, after the Butter-Week, I told him that I had to prepare my lessons, and went up-stairs; but fifteen minutes later somebody opened the door of the class-room, and Nekhlyúdov came up to me.

"Am I disturbing you?" he said.

"No," I answered, though I had intended to show him that I really was busy.

"Then why did you go away from Volódya's room? We have not philosophized for quite awhile. And I am so used to it, that I feel as though something were wanting."

My annoyance passed away in a minute, and Dmítri again became in my eyes the good and dear man he was.

"You, no doubt, know why I went out," said I.

"Perhaps," he answered, seating himself near me. "But if I do guess it, I cannot tell you, though you may tell me," he said.

"I will tell you. I went away because I was angry with you — not angry, but I was annoyed. I am simply always afraid that you despise me because I am so young."

"Do you know why we have become so friendly?" he said, answering my confession with a wise, kindly smile, "why I love you more than people with whom I am

better acquainted, and with whom I have more in common? I have just solved it. You have a remarkable, rare quality — sincerity."

"Yes, I always say those things which I am ashamed to confess," I confirmed him, "but only to those of whom I am sure."

"Yes. But to be sure of a man, one must be friends with him, but we are not yet friends, Nicolas. You remember we said of friendship that, in order to be true friends, each must be sure of the other."

"Sure that you will not tell anybody what I tell you," I said. "And the most important and interesting thoughts are those which we would not tell each other for anything. And mean thoughts, — contemptible thoughts would never dare to enter our minds, if we knew that we had to confess them."

"Do you know what idea has struck me, Nicolas?" he added, rising from his chair, and rubbing his hands with a smile. "Let us do it, and you will see how useful it will be to both of us: let us promise to confess everything to each other! We shall know each other, and we shall have no scruples; and, not to be afraid of outsiders, let us promise never to mention each other to anybody, at any time! Let us do it!"

"All right," I said.

And we really did it. I shall tell you later what came of it.

Karr has said that in every attachment there are two sides: one loves, the other allows itself to be loved; one kisses, the other submits its cheek. That is quite true. In our friendship, I kissed, and Dmítri submitted his cheek; but he, too, was ready to kiss me. We loved equally, because we knew and esteemed each other; but this did not prevent his exerting an influence upon me, and my submitting to him.

Of course, under the influence of Nekhlyúdov I invol-

untarily appropriated his point of view, the essence of which was an ecstatic worship of the ideal of virtue, and the conviction that a man's destiny is continually to perfect himself. At that time it seemed a practicable affair to correct humanity at large, to destroy all human vices and misfortunes, — and, therefore, it looked easy and simple to correct oneself, to appropriate to oneself all virtues and be happy.

Still, God alone knows whether these noble dreams of youth were ridiculous, and who is to blame that they were not realized.

YOUTH

A Novel

1855–57

YOUTH

I.

WHAT I REGARD AS THE BEGINNING OF MY YOUTH

I HAVE said that my friendship with Dmítri had opened up to me a new view of life, its aims and relations. The essence of this view consisted in the conviction that man's destiny was a striving for moral perfection, and that this perfection was easy, possible, and eternal. But till then I merely enjoyed the discovery of new ideas which resulted from this conviction, and the formation of brilliant plans for an active, moral future, while my life proceeded in the same petty, tangled, and indolent order.

So far the virtuous ideas, which my adored friend Dmítri, whom I sometimes called to myself in a whisper "Charming Mítya," and I used to discuss in our chats, pleased only my reason, and not my feeling. But a time came when these ideas burst upon my reason with such a fresh power of moral discovery that I became frightened at the thought of how much time I had spent in vain, and I wished immediately, that very second, to apply all those ideas to life, with the firm intention of never being false to them.

This time I regard as the beginning of my youth.

I was then finishing my sixteenth year. Teachers still

came to the house, St. Jérôme looked after my studies, and I was preparing myself reluctantly, and against my will, for the university. Outside of studies, my occupations consisted in solitary, disconnected dreams and reflections, in practising gymnastics in order to become the first strong man in the world, in loitering without any definite aim or thought about all the rooms, but especially in the corridor of the maids' side, and in observing myself in the looking-glass, from which, however, I always went away with a heavy feeling of melancholy and disgust. I was not only convinced that my looks were homely, but I could not even console myself with the usual consolations in such circumstances. I could not say that I had an expressive, intelligent, or noble countenance. There was nothing expressive, — nothing but the commonest, coarsest, and ugliest of features; my small, gray eyes were, especially when I looked in the mirror, rather dull than intelligent. There was even less of manliness in me; though I was not at all undersized, and very strong for my years, all the features of my face were soft, flabby, and undefined. There was not even anything noble in them; on the contrary, my face was like that of a common peasant, and such also were my large feet and hands, — and all that seemed then a disgraceful thing to me.

II.

SPRING

THE year I entered the university, Easter was late in April, so that the examinations were to be the first week after Easter, and during Passion Week I was to prepare myself for the sacrament, and get ready in general.

After a wet snow, which Karl Ivánovich used to call "the son has come to fetch the father," the weather had been for three days calm, warm, and clear. Not a speck of snow was to be seen in the streets, and the pasty mud had given way to a moist, glistening pavement and rapid rivulets. The last drops on the roofs were drying up in the sun; in the gardens the buds were swelling on the trees; in the courtyard there was a dry path to the stable, past a frozen heap of dung; and near the porch mossy grass sprouted between the stones. It was that peculiar period of spring which most powerfully affects a human soul: a bright, illuminating, but not warm sun, rivulets and thawed spots, an aromatic freshness in the air, and a gently azure sky with long, transparent clouds. I do not know why, but it seems to me that in a large city the effect of this first period of the new-born spring is more perceptible and powerful, — one sees less, but surmises more.

I was standing near the window, through which the morning sun was casting athwart the double panes its dusty rays upon the floor of my noisome class-room, and was solving some long algebraical equation on the black-

board. In one hand I held a torn, coverless algebra of Franker, in the other a small piece of chalk, with which I had soiled both my hands, my face, and the elbows of my half-dress coat. Nikoláy, in an apron and rolled-up sleeves, was breaking off the putty and unbending the nails of the window that opened on the garden. His occupation and the noise which he made distracted my attention. Besides, I was in a very bad and dissatisfied mood. Everything somehow went against me; I had made a mistake in the beginning of the calculation, so that I had to start again; I twice dropped the chalk; I felt that my face and hands were all soiled; the sponge got lost somewhere; the noise which Nikoláy produced made me dreadfully nervous. I wanted to get angry and to grumble; I threw down the chalk and the algebra, and began to walk up and down the room. I recalled that we had to go to confession that very day, and that I had to abstain from everything bad. Suddenly a meek spirit came over me, and I walked up to Nikoláy.

"Let me help you, Nikoláy," I said, endeavouring to give my voice a meek expression. The thought that I was doing right in suppressing my anger and in helping him increased my meek mood still more.

The putty was knocked off, the nails unbent; but although Nikoláy jerked at the crosspiece with all his might, the frame did not move.

"If the frame will come out at once, when I pull with him," I thought, "I shall take it to be a sin to work any more to-day." The frame moved to one side and came out.

"Where shall I take it to?" I asked.

"Permit me, I will do it myself," answered Nikoláy, evidently surprised, and rather dissatisfied with my zeal. "I must not get them mixed up, for I have them there by numbers, in the lumber-room."

"I will look out," I said, lifting the frame.

It seemed to me that if the lumber-room were two versts away, and the frame twice as heavy, I should have been very well satisfied. I wanted to exert myself while obliging Nikoláy. When I returned to the room, the small bricks and the salt pyramids[1] were already lying on the sill, and Nikoláy, with a wing duster, was sweeping the sand and the drowsy flies through the open window. The fresh, fragrant air penetrated the room and filled it. Through the window was heard the din of the city and the chirping of the sparrows in the garden.

All objects were brilliantly illuminated, the room looked merrier, a light spring breeze agitated the leaves of my algebra and the hair on Nikoláy's head. I went up to the window, sat upon it, bent down to the garden, and fell to musing.

A novel, exceedingly powerful and pleasant sensation suddenly penetrated into my soul. The damp earth, through which here and there burst bright-green blades of grass, with their yellow stalks; the rills glistening in the sun, along which meandered pieces of earth and chips; the blushing twigs of the lilac bushes with their swelling buds swaying under the very window; the busy chirping of the birds that swarmed in the bushes; the black fence wet with the thawing snow; but, above all, that aromatic moist air and joyous sun spoke to me distinctly and clearly of something new and beautiful, which, though I am not able to tell it as it appeared to me, I shall attempt to tell as I conceived it. Everything spoke to me of beauty, happiness, and virtue; it told me that all that was easy and possible for me, that one thing could not be without the other, and even that beauty, happiness, and virtue were one and the same. "How was it I did not understand it before? As bad as I was in the past, so good and happy shall I become in the future!" I said to myself. "I must at once, this very minute, become

[1] Placed on the sand between the double windows.

another man, and live another life." In spite of this, I sat for a long time on the window, dreaming and doing nothing.

Have you ever happened to fall asleep on a gloomy, rainy summer day, and, awaking at sundown, to open your eyes; through the broadening quadrilateral of the window, beneath the canvas awning, that, blown up by the wind, strikes its rod against the window-sill, to observe the shady, lilac side of the avenue of lindens, wet from rain, and the damp garden path, illuminated by the slanting rays of the sun; suddenly to hear the merry life of the birds in the garden; to see the insects that, translucent in the sun, hover in the opening of the window; to smell the fragrance of the air after the rain; to think "How ashamed I am to have slept through such an evening;" and hurriedly to jump up, in order to run into the garden to enjoy life? If such a thing has happened to you, you have a picture of that powerful feeling which I experienced at that time.

III.

DREAMS

"To-day I shall confess and cleanse myself of all my sins," I thought, "and I never again — " (here I thought of all the sins that most tormented me). "I shall go every Sunday to church, and afterward shall read the Gospel for a whole hour; and, from every twenty-five-rouble bill, which I shall receive every month as soon as I enter the university, I shall certainly give two and a half roubles (a tithe) to the poor, without letting anybody know it; and not to mere beggars shall I give it, but I shall hunt up some destitute people, an orphan or an old woman, of whom nobody knows.

"I shall have a separate room (no doubt St. Jérôme's), and I shall fix it up myself and keep it in wonderful order; I shall not permit a servant to do anything for me. For is he not just such a man as I am? For the same reason I shall walk every day to the university (and if they give me a vehicle, I shall sell it, and use the money for the poor), and promptly execute everything" (what that "everything" was I should not have been able at that time to tell, but I vividly understood and felt that "everything" of a sensible, moral, and blameless life).

"I shall take down the lectures, and even prepare my subjects in advance, so that I shall be first in the first year, and shall write a dissertation. In the second year I shall know everything in advance, and they will be able to promote me at once to the third year, so that at eight-

een years of age I shall graduate as a Candidate with two golden medals; then I shall get my master's and my doctor's degree, and I shall be the first learned man in Russia, I may even become the greatest scholar in Europe.

"Well, and then?" I asked myself; but I happened to think that these dreams were proud, consequently, a sin which I should have to tell that very evening to the priest, and I returned to the beginning of my reflections.

"To prepare my lectures, I shall walk to the Sparrow Hills. There I shall choose a spot under some tree, where I can read them over. Sometimes I shall take a lunch along with me, some cheese, or pasties from Pedotti, or something of the kind. I shall rest awhile, after which I shall read a good book, or draw a landscape, or play an instrument (I must by all means learn to play the flute). Then, *she*, too, will walk out to the Sparrow Hills, and she will some day walk up to me, and ask who I am. I shall glance sadly at her, and say that I am the son of a clergyman, and that I am happy only when I am here alone, all sole alone. She will give me her hand, will say something, and sit down by my side. Thus, we shall go there every day and be friends, and I shall kiss her — no, that is not good, on the contrary, from to-day I shall never again look at women. I shall never, never go to the maids' room, not even near it; three years later I shall be of age, and shall certainly marry.

"I shall take exercise as much as possible, and practise gymnastics every day, so that when I am twenty-five years old, I shall be stronger than Rappeau. The first day I shall hold twenty pounds in my outstretched arm, the next day twenty-one pounds, the third twenty-two, and so on, until at last one hundred and sixty pounds in each hand, so that I shall be stronger than anybody among the servants; and if anybody dares to insult me, or to refer disrespectfully to *her*, I shall take him just by his

chest, shall raise him with my hand some five feet from the ground, and hold him awhile, to make him feel my strength, and then let him go; however, that is not good; no, it will not do any harm, I sha'n't do anything to him: I shall only prove to him that I —"

Let no one accuse me that the dreams of my youth were just as childish as the dreams of my childhood and boyhood. I am convinced that if it is my lot to live to an old age, and if my story overtakes my old age, I, as a man of seventy years, shall dream just such impossible, childish dreams, as in the past. I shall dream of some charming Mary who will fall in love with me, the toothless old man, as she fell in love with Mazeppa; of my weak-minded son suddenly becoming minister by some strange accident; or of my suddenly losing millions. I am convinced that there is not a human being or an age that is free from this benign, consoling ability to dream. But, except for the common feature of their impossibility and their fairy-like nature, the dreams of every man and every age have their distinguishing characteristics. At that period, which I regard as the extreme limit of boyhood and beginning of youth, at the basis of my dreams were four sentiments: the love for *her*, an imaginary woman, of whom I dreamt ever in the same way, and whom I expected to meet somewhere at any minute. This *she* was partly Sónichka, partly Másha, Vasíli's wife, while washing linen in the trough, and partly a woman with pearls on her white neck, whom I had seen long ago in the theatre, in a box near us. My second sentiment was the love of love. I wanted everybody to know and love me. I wanted to say my name "Nikoláy Irténev," and have every one struck by this information, and surround me and thank me for something. The third sentiment was a hope for some unusual, vain happiness, — such a strong and firm hope that it passed into insanity. I was so convinced that very soon I should, by some

extraordinary occurrence, become the richest and most distinguished man in the world, that I continually lived in an agitated expectancy of some fairy happiness. I was waiting for it to begin, when I should obtain all that a man may wish, and I was always in a hurry, lest it should begin where I was not. My fourth and chief sentiment was my self-disgust and repentance, but a repentance which so closely welded with the hope of happiness, that there was nothing sad in it. It seemed to me so easy and natural to tear myself away from all my past, to transform and forget everything which was before, and to begin life with all its relations entirely anew, in order that the past should not oppress nor bind me. I even found pleasure in my disgust with the past, and tried to see it blacker than it was. The blacker the circle of my memories of the past, the brighter and cleaner stood out from it the bright and clean point of the present, and streamed the rainbow colours of the future. This voice of repentance and passionate desire for perfection was the main new sensation of my soul at that epoch of my development, and it was this which laid a new foundation for my views of myself, of people, and of the whole world.

Beneficent, consoling voice, which since then has so often arisen suddenly and boldly against all lies in those sad moments, when the soul in silence submitted to the power of deceit and debauch in life, which has angrily accused the past, has indicated the bright point of the present, causing one to love it, and has promised happiness and well-being in the future, — beneficent, consoling voice! will you ever cease to be heard?

IV.

OUR FAMILY CIRCLE

PAPA was rarely at home during this spring. But when it did happen, he was exceedingly merry, strummed his favourite airs on the piano, smiled gaily at us, and joked us all, especially Mimi; he would say, for example, that the Tsarévich of Georgia had seen Mimi while she was out driving, and had fallen so in love with her that he had petitioned the Synod for a divorce; that I was to be appointed secretary to the ambassador at Vienna, — and he announced these items of news to us with a serious countenance; he frightened Kátenka with spiders, of which she was afraid; he was very kind to our friends Dubkóv and Nekhlyúdov, and continually told us and our guests his plans for the next year. Although these plans changed nearly every day, and contradicted each other, they were so attractive that we listened to them with pleasure, and Lyúbochka looked at papa's mouth without winking, lest she should lose a single word. Now the plan was for him to leave us at the university in Moscow, and go himself with Lyúbochka to Italy for two years; now, to buy an estate in the Crimea, on its southern shore, and to go there every summer; now, to settle with the whole family in St. Petersburg, and so on. Besides the unusual merriment, another change had of late taken place in papa, at which I marvelled very much. He had had made for himself a fashionable suit, — an olive-coloured dress coat, fashionable pantaloons with foot-straps, and a

long wadded overcoat, which was very becoming to him, and frequently he was scented with perfume, when he drove out to make calls, but especially at the house of a lady, of whom Mimi never spoke but with sighs and with a face upon which one almost could read the words: "Poor orphans! Unlucky passion! It is well that she is no more." I found out from Nikoláy, for papa would not tell us anything about his gaming, that he had been particularly lucky at cards that winter; he had won an immense sum, which he had deposited in the bank, and in the spring he did not want to play again. No doubt because he was afraid of the temptation, he wanted to leave for the country as soon as possible, He had even decided not to wait for my entering the university, but to leave immediately after Easter with the girls for Petróvskoe, whither Volódya and I were to go later.

Volódya was all that winter, until spring, inseparable from Dubkóv, but his relation with Dmítri was beginning to cool off. Their chief entertainments, so far as I could conclude from the conversations which I heard, consisted in drinking champagne, driving in sleighs by the windows of a lady, with whom they were both, I think, in love, and in dancing vis-à-vis, not at children's, but at real balls. This latter circumstance separated us very much, though we loved each other. We felt too great a difference between a boy who had teachers coming to him, and a man who danced at the balls of grown people, ever to make up our minds to tell each other our secrets.

Kátenka was quite a young lady, and read a lot of novels, and the thought that she would marry soon did not seem a joke any longer; yet, though Volódya himself was a young man, they did not become very intimate, and, it seemed, even despised each other. In general, whenever Kátenka was alone at home, nothing interested her but novels, and she suffered ennui; but when there were outside gentlemen present, she became very lively and

agreeable, and used her eyes in such a way, that I was unable to make out what she meant. Later I learned from a conversation of hers that the only permissible coquetry for a maiden was that of the eyes, and so I was able to explain to myself those strange, unnatural gestures with the eyes, which did not seem to surprise others.

Lyúbochka was beginning to wear a very long dress, so that her crooked legs could not be seen, but she was the same cry-baby she had been before. Now she was dreaming of marrying, not a hussar, but a singer or musician, and for this purpose she applied herself zealously to music.

St. Jérôme, who knew that he would stay in our house only until the end of my examinations, had found a place at the house of some count, and ever since had looked down contemptuously on our people. He was rarely at home, began to smoke cigarettes, which then was a sign of dandyism, and continually whistled some jolly airs through a visiting-card.

Mimi grew sadder from day to day, and did not expect anything good from any of us, ever since we had grown up.

When I came to dinner I found only Mimi, Kátenka, Lyúbochka, and St. Jérôme in the dining-room. Papa was not at home, and Volódya was preparing for his examination with his companions in his room, and had ordered his dinner to be sent up to him. Of late, Mimi generally occupied the place of honour at the table, but none of us respected her, and so the dinner lost much of its charm. The dinner no longer was, as with mamma and grandmother, a ceremony which at a certain hour united the whole family, and divided the day into halves. We allowed ourselves to be late, to arrive only at the second course, to drink wine in tumblers (an example set by St. Jérôme), to lean back in the chair, to rise before the end of the dinner, and similar liberties. It was quite differ-

ent at Petróvskoe, when at two o'clock all sat in the sitting-room washed and dressed for dinner, chatting merrily until the appointed hour. Precisely at the moment when the clock in the officiating-room growled, in order to strike two, Fóka softly walked in, with a dignified and somewhat austere face, holding his napkin over his arm. "Dinner is served!" he announced in a loud, drawling voice, and everybody went to the dining-room with a happy and satisfied countenance, the older people in front, the younger ones behind, rustling their starched petticoats and creaking with their boots and shoes, — and conversing in an undertone, they all seated themselves at their proper places. How different, too, it was in Moscow, when all, speaking softly, stood before the table which was set in the parlour, waiting for grandmother, to whom Gavrílo had gone to announce that the meal was served! Suddenly the door opened, there was heard the rustle of a dress and the shuffling of feet, and grandmother, in a cap with some extraordinary lilac ribbon, sailed in sideways, smiling or looking gloomy, according to the condition of her health. Gavrílo rushed to her armchair, the chairs were moved, and feeling a chill pass down my back, — a foreboding of a good appetite, — I would take up the damp, starched napkin and munch a crust of bread, and, rubbing my hands under the table in impatient and pleasant anticipation, would look at the steaming plates of soup, which the majordomo poured out according to rank, age, and grandmother's considerate attention.

Now I no longer experienced any pleasure or agitation, when I came to dinner.

The gossip of Mimi, St. Jérôme, and the girls about the terrible boots of the teacher of Russian, about trimmings on the dresses of the Princesses Kornákov and so forth, — their gossip, which formerly used to inspire me with genuine loathing that I did not try to conceal, especially before

Lyúbochka and Kátenka, did not ruffle my new, virtuous temper. I was exceedingly meek; I smiled and respectfully listened to them, respectfully asked them to pass me the kvas, and agreed with St. Jérôme, who corrected a phrase of mine which I had used at dinner, remarking that it was more elegant to say *je puis* than *je peux*. I must, however, confess that I was a little disappointed because nobody paid any attention to my meekness and virtue. Lyúbochka showed me after dinner a piece of paper on which she had marked down all her sins; I found that it was all very well, but that it was better still to write down one's sins in one's soul, and that her way was not "just the right thing."

"Why is it not the right thing?" asked Lyúbochka.

"Well, this is good, too; but you will not understand me." And I went up-stairs, saying to St. Jérôme that I went to study, but, in reality, to write out, in the hour and a half that were left before the confession, a schedule of all my duties and occupations for my whole life, to put down on paper the aim of my life and the rules from which I was never to depart in all my actions.

V.

THE RULES

I TOOK a sheet of paper, and first intended to consider the schedule of my obligations and occupations for the next year. I had to line the paper, but as I could not find the ruler, I used the Latin lexicon for it. After drawing the pen along the lexicon and removing the latter, I discovered that I had made a long puddle of ink on the paper, instead of a line, and that, since the lexicon was not long enough, the line had bent downward along its soft edge. I took another sheet and, moving the lexicon carefully, managed to get it ruled after a fashion.

I divided my duties into three categories: into duties to myself, to my neighbours, and to God. Then I began to write down the first, but there turned up so many of them, and so many kinds and subdivisions of them, that I had to write first "Rules of Life," and not until then to consider the schedule. I took six sheets of paper, sewed them into a book, and wrote above, "Rules of Life." These words were written so crookedly and unevenly, that I long considered whether I had not better rewrite them, and felt annoyed, as I looked at the torn schedule and the monstrous heading. "Why is everything so beautiful and clear in my soul, and yet so horrible on paper, and in life in general, when I want to apply to it something I am thinking of?"

"The father confessor has come. Please come downstairs to hear the rules!" Nikoláy announced.

I concealed the book in the table, looked in the mirror, brushed my hair upwards, which, in my opinion, gave me a pensive appearance, and went down into the sofa-room, where a table was placed with the image and the burning wax candles upon it. Papa entered the room through another door at the same time with me. The priest, a gray-haired monk, blessed papa with the stern mien of an old man. Papa kissed his small, broad, dry hand. I did the same.

"Call Vóldemar!" said papa. "Where is he? But no, he is preparing for the sacrament at the university."

"He is busy with the prince," said Kátenka, and looked at Lyúbochka. Lyúbochka suddenly blushed and, frowning as though she were in pain, left the room. I followed her. She stopped in the sitting-room, and wrote something down on the paper with her pencil.

"What, have you committed a new sin?" I asked.

"No, nothing, just nothing," she answered, blushing.

Just then was heard Dmítri's voice in the antechamber, bidding Volódya good-bye.

"Well, everything is a temptation for you," said Kátenka, entering the room and turning to Lyúbochka.

I could not make out what was the matter with Lyúbochka: she was confused, so that tears appeared in her eyes, and her agitation, reaching its highest limit, passed into annoyance with herself and with Kátenka, who evidently was teasing her.

"One can see you are a foreigner" (nothing could be more offensive to Kátenka than being called a foreigner, and Lyúbochka used the word intentionally); "before this mystery," she continued in a solemn voice, "you disturb me on purpose — you ought to understand — it is not a trifling matter."

"Do you know, Nikólenka, what she wrote down?" said Kátenka, who was offended by the name of foreigner. "She wrote —"

"I did not expect you to be as mean as that," said Lyúbochka, blubbering, as she left us. "At such moments you on purpose, *all my life*, lead me into sin. I do not bother you with my sentiments and sufferings."

VI.

THE CONFESSION

WITH these and similar distracting reflections I returned to the sofa-room, when all had gathered there, and the priest rose, ready to read the prayer before the confession. But when, amidst a general silence, was heard the clear, stern voice of the monk saying the prayer, and especially when he pronounced the words to us, "Lay open all your transgressions without shame, concealment, or justification, and your soul shall be cleansed before God, but if you conceal anything, you shall incur a great sin," the feeling of devout tremor, which I had experienced in the morning at the thought of the impending mystery, returned to me. I even found pleasure in the consciousness of this state, and I tried to retain it, by arresting all the thoughts which came to my mind, and by endeavouring to fear something.

Papa went first to confession. He remained very long in grandmother's room, and all that time we were silent in the sofa-room, or in a whisper talked about who would come next. Then, the voice of the monk saying the prayer was once more heard in the door, and papa's steps. The door creaked, and he came out, coughing, as was his habit, jerking his shoulder, and not looking at any of us.

"Now, you go, Lyúba, but be sure and say everything. You are a great sinner, you know," merrily spoke papa, pinching her cheek.

Lyúbochka grew pale and blushed, took her note out of her apron and hid it again, and, lowering her head and somehow shortening her neck, as if expecting a blow from above, passed through the door. She did not stay there long, but when she issued thence, her shoulders were convulsed with sobs.

Finally, after pretty Kátenka had returned through the door smiling, my turn arrived. I went into the dimly lighted room with the same dull fear and the same desire consciously to increase that fear. The priest stood before the reading-desk, and slowly turned his face to me.

I passed not more than five minutes in grandmother's room, and I came out of it happy and, as I was then convinced, completely purified, morally regenerated, and a new man. Although I was unpleasantly affected by the old circumstance of life, by the old rooms, the old furniture, my old figure (I wished that all the external things might have changed as much as I thought I had changed internally), in spite of it all, I remained in this blissful frame of mind up to the time when I went to bed.

I was falling asleep, going over in my imagination all the sins from which I had been cleansed, when suddenly I recalled a shameful sin which I had concealed at the confession. The words of the prayer before the confession came to my mind and continually dinned in my ears. My peace was gone at once. "But if you conceal anything, you shall incur a great sin," resounded in my ears without interruption, and I saw myself as such a terrible sinner, that there was no adequate punishment for me. I long tossed from side to side, reflecting on my situation and awaiting the divine punishment at any time, and even sudden death, — a thought which induced an indescribable terror in me. All at once a happy thought came to me: the next morning, soon after daybreak, I would walk or drive to the priest in the monastery, to confess once more, and I quieted down.

VII.

DRIVE TO THE MONASTERY

I AWOKE several times during the night, fearing to sleep through the morning, and at six o'clock I was already on my feet. Day was just dawning. I put on my clothes and my boots, which lay rumpled and unbrushed near my bed, because Nikoláy had not had time to take them away, and without praying or washing, I for the first time in my life went out by myself into the street.

On the opposite side, the misty, chilly dawn gleamed behind the green roof of a large house. A fairly strong vernal morning frost fettered the mud and rills, stung my feet, and pinched my face and hands. In our lane there was no cabman with whom I could drive there and back at once as I had hoped. Only some wagons were slowly going down the Arbát, and two stone-masons passed, chatting, on the sidewalk. After I had walked some thousand paces, I began to come across men and women who were going to market with their baskets, and water-carts which were driving to get their barrels filled; a cake-seller walked out on the cross-road; a bakery opened its door; and at the Arbát gates I fell in with a cabman, an old man, who was asleep and nodding in his faded, grayish blue and patched-up vehicle. He was evidently still half asleep when he asked twenty kopeks for driving me to the monastery and back, but he suddenly came to his senses, and when I was about to take my seat, he

whipped up his horses with the ends of his reins, and drove away from me. "I have to feed the horse! I can't take you, sir!" he mumbled.

I stopped him after much persuasion, by offering him forty kopeks. He pulled up his horse, cautiously examined me, and said: "Take your seat, sir!" I must say I was a little afraid he would take me to some blind alley, to rob me. Getting hold of the collar of his badly torn cloak, thus ruthlessly laying bare the wrinkled neck over his stooping shoulders, I climbed on the blue, saddle-formed, shaky seat, and we rattled along the Vozdvízhenka. On the way down I noticed that the back of the vehicle was patched with a piece of greenish material, the same that his cloak was made of; this circumstance for some reason quieted me, and I no longer was afraid that he would take me to a blind alley, to rob me.

The sun had risen quite high, and brilliantly illuminated the cupolas of the churches, when we drove up to the monastery. In the shade there was still some frost, but all along the road flowed rapid, turbid rills, and the horse splashed in the thawing mud. After passing through the monastery enclosure, I asked the first person whom I met where to find the father confessor.

"There is his cell," said the monk, stopping for a minute and pointing to a small house with a porch.

"I thank you very much," I said.

What could the monks have thought of me, as they gazed at me, upon issuing, one after another, from the church? I was neither a man, nor a child; my face was not washed, my hair not combed, my clothes were covered with feathers, my boots were unblacked and muddy. To what category of men did the monks mentally refer me as they gazed at me? They certainly surveyed me attentively. I continued to walk in the direction which the young monk had pointed out to me.

An old man in black garments, with thick gray eye-

brows, met me on the narrow path that led to the cells and asked me what I wanted.

There was a minute when I wanted to say "Nothing," run back to the cab, and drive home, but, in spite of his threatening eyebrows, the old man's countenance inspired confidence. I said that I wanted to see the father confessor, giving his name.

"Come, young gentleman, I will take you there!" he said, turning back, and evidently guessing my predicament. "The father is at morning mass, but he will be here soon."

He opened the door, and through a clean hall and antechamber led me over a neat canvas strip to the cell.

"You wait here," he said, with a kind-hearted, soothing expression, and went out.

The room in which I found myself was very small and was kept exceedingly clean. The furniture consisted of a small table covered with oilcloth, standing between two tiny double windows, upon which stood two pots of geraniums, of a small stand with images and a lamp hanging before them, of one armchair and two straight chairs. In the corner hung a clock, with a flower design on its face and brass weights on a chain; on the partition, which was connected with the ceiling by whitewashed wooden crosspieces (behind which, no doubt, was a bed), two cowls hung upon nails.

The windows faced a white wall which was within six feet of them. Between them and the wall was a small lilac bush. No sound reached the room from without, so that in that silence the even, pleasant click of the pendulum appeared as a loud noise. The moment I was left alone in that quiet corner, all my former thoughts and reminiscences leaped out of my head as if they had never been there, and I was all merged in inexpressibly pleasant contemplation. That faded nankeen hood with threadbare lining, those well-thumbed black leather bindings of

the books with their brass clasps, those turbidly green flowers with their carefully watered earth and washed leaves, but particularly that monotonous, broken sound of the pendulum, spoke to me distinctly of a new, heretofore unfamiliar life, of a life of seclusion, prayer, and quiet, peaceful happiness.

"Months pass, years pass," I thought, "and he is always alone, always calm, always feels that his conscience is clean before God and that his prayer will be heard by him." I sat about half an hour in my chair, trying not to move and not to breathe audibly, in order not to disturb the harmony of the sounds that told me so much. And the pendulum continued ticking, louder toward the right, softer toward the left.

VIII.

MY SECOND CONFESSION

THE steps of the priest broke my meditation.

"Good morning," he said, smoothing his gray hair with his hand. "What do you wish?"

I asked him to bless me, and with especial pleasure kissed his small yellow hand.

When I explained to him my request, he said nothing, but walked up to the images and began the confession.

When the confession was finished, and I, overcoming my shame, told him all that was upon my soul, he placed his hands upon my head, and pronounced with his melodious, quiet voice: "The blessing of the heavenly Father be over you, my son, and may He for ever preserve your faith, meekness, and humility. Amen."

I was very happy. Tears of bliss welled up in my throat, I kissed the fold of his kerseymere cowl, and raised my head. The monk's countenance was serene.

I felt I was enjoying the sensation of contrition, and fearing lest it should be dispersed, I hastily bade the confessor good-bye, and, without looking on either side, in order not to be distracted, left the enclosure and again seated myself in the jogging, patched-up vehicle. But the jolting of the carriage and the motley aspect of the objects that flashed by my eyes soon dispelled that feeling, and I was thinking now of how the father confessor must be reflecting that he had never, in all his life, met, nor ever should meet, such a beautiful soul in a young

man such as I was, and even that there could not be the like of me. I was convinced of this; and this conviction induced in me a feeling of that kind of happiness which demands that it shall be imparted to somebody.

I was dying to talk to somebody; and as there was no one near at hand but the cabman, I turned to him.

"Say, was I gone long?" I asked.

"Well, rather long, and it is time to feed the horses, for I am a night cabman," answered the old driver, who, with the sun, had become comparatively livelier than he had been before.

"It seemed to me that I was gone but a minute," I said. "Do you know why I went to the monastery?" I added, seating myself in the lower part of the vehicle, which was nearer to the old man.

"What business is that of ours? Wherever our passengers tell us to go, there we go," he answered.

"Still, what do you think, why?"

"Well, I suppose you went to buy a lot to bury somebody in," he said.

"No, my friend. Do you know why I went there?"

"How can I know, sir?" he repeated.

The cabman's voice seemed so kindly that I decided, for his edification, to tell him the cause of my visit, and also the feeling which I was experiencing.

"If you wish, I will tell you. You see —"

And I told him everything, and described all my beautiful feelings to him. I even now blush at the thought of it.

"Indeed, sir," the cabman said, incredulously.

He remained silent for quite awhile and sat immovable, now and then fixing the fold of his cloak, which kept disarranging itself, between his striped legs that leaped about in their huge boots on the foothold of the vehicle. I concluded that he, too, was of the same opinion in regard to me as the priest; that is, that there was not in

the whole world another young man so beautiful. He suddenly turned round to me.

"Well, sir, yours is a gentlemanly affair!"

"What?" I asked.

"Your affair, I say, is a gentleman's affair!" he repeated, mumbling with his toothless lips.

"No, he did not understand me," I thought, and I did not say anything to him until we reached the house.

Not the feeling of contrition and piety itself, but satisfaction at having experienced it lasted during my whole ride, in spite of all the crowd that moved about the streets in the bright sunshine; but the moment I reached home, that feeling vanished completely. I did not have the forty kopeks to pay the driver. Majordomo Gavrílo, to whom I was already in debt, would not loan me any more. When the driver saw me twice running across the yard in order to get the money, he guessed what I was about, climbed down from his vehicle and, in spite of his apparent kindliness, began to cry aloud, with the evident desire of stinging me, that there were certain cheats who did not pay for their rides.

Everybody at home was still asleep, so that I could not borrow the money from any one but the servants. Finally, Vasíli, who liked me and remembered the service which I had done him, paid the driver, having first exacted my most solemn word of honour, which, however, as I saw by his face, he did not believe in the least. Thus the feeling went off as in smoke. When I dressed myself for church, in order to go with the others to receive the sacrament, and discovered that my clothes had not been mended and I could not put them on, I committed a lot of sins. Putting on another suit, I went to the sacrament in a strange condition of hastiness of thought and with a complete suspicion of my beautiful intentions.

IX.

HOW I PREPARED FOR THE EXAMINATIONS

On Thursday of Easter Week, papa, sister, and Mimi, with Kátenka, went away to the country, so that in grandmother's large house only Volódya, St. Jérôme, and I were left. My frame of mind on the day of the confession and of my visit to the monastery had completely disappeared, and had left behind it only a dim, though pleasant, memory, which was more and more drowned by new impressions of a free life.

The note-book with the title "Rules of Life" was put away with the other exercise books. Although the idea that it was possible to compose rules for all circumstances of life, and always to be guided by them, pleased me and seemed to me very simple and at the same time great, — and I had intended by all means to apply the rules to life, — I somehow forgot that it had to be done right away, and kept postponing it to some future time. I was pleased to find that every idea which came to my mind fitted precisely into one of the subdivisions of my rules and duties: into the rules in regard to my neighbour, or to myself, or to God. "I shall then write it down in that category, together with the mass of other ideas that will occur to me about the same subject," I said to myself. I often ask myself now: when was I better and juster, then, when I believed in the all-power of the human mind, or now, when, having lost the ability to develop, I

doubt the power and meaning of the human mind? and I am unable to give myself a positive answer.

The consciousness of freedom and that vernal feeling of expectancy, of which I have spoken before, agitated me so much that I was absolutely unable to control myself, and I prepared but badly for my examinations. In the morning, while I was working in the class-room and was conscious that I had to work hard, because next day was the examination in a subject of which I had not read two whole questions as yet, suddenly some vernal fragrance would reach me through the window and it would seem that I had to recall something, and my hands would automatically drop the book, my feet begin automatically to move and pace to and fro, and I would feel as though somebody had touched a spring, and the whole machine had been put in motion, and all kinds of blissful thoughts would begin to course through my head so lightly, naturally, and swiftly, that I could perceive only their flashing. And thus an hour or two would pass unobserved.

Or I would be reading some book and concentrating my attention upon what I was reading, when I would hear feminine steps and the rustle of a dress in the corridor, — and everything would leap out of my head, and I could no longer sit in one place, although I knew full well that nobody had crossed the corridor but Gásha, grandmother's old maid. "But, suppose it should suddenly be *she?*" it would occur to me. "Suppose it is beginning now, and I should lose my chance?" and I would rush out into the corridor, and convince myself that it was really Gásha. Yet it would be some time after that before I could control my head. The spring was touched, and again there was a terrible pandemonium.

Or, again, I would be sitting in the evening by a tallow candle in my room. Suddenly I would tear myself away from my book for a moment, to snuff the candle or settle

myself in the chair, and I would see that it was dark in all the doors and corners, and hear that it was quiet in the whole house, — and, of course, I could not help stopping and listening to that silence, and looking at that darkness of the door that opened into a dark room, and for a long time remaining in an immovable position, or walking through all the empty rooms of the house. Frequently, too, I used to sit through the evenings unnoticed in the parlour, listening to the sound of the "nightingale" which Gásha, sitting all alone in the parlour by a tallow dip, was playing on the piano with two fingers. And in the moonlight I could not help rising from my bed, and, leaning over the window-sill into the garden, I would gaze at the illuminated roof of Shapóshnikov's house, and at the stately bell-tower of our parish, and the evening shadows of the fence and the shrubbery, which lay across the garden path; I could not help staying there so long that I later could not wake before ten o'clock.

So if it had not been for the teachers that came to me, and for St. Jérôme, who now and then unwillingly fired my ambition, and, mainly, for the fact that I was anxious to appear as a fine fellow in the eyes of my friend Nekhlyúdov, that is, to pass excellent examinations, which, according to him, was a very important matter, — if it had not been for all that, — spring and freedom would have made me forget everything I ever knew, and I should never have been able to pass my examinations.

X.

MY HISTORY EXAMINATION

On April 16th I entered for the first time the university hall under the guidance of St. Jérôme. We drove there in our sufficiently foppish phaeton. I had on a dress coat, for the first time in my life, and all my clothes, even my linen and stockings, were new and of the best. When the doorkeeper took off my overcoat down-stairs, and I stood before him in all the splendour of my dress, I felt a little ashamed at being so strikingly magnificent. Yet the moment I entered the bright parqueted hall, filled with people, and noticed the hundreds of young men in Gymnasium uniforms and dress coats, some of whom looked at me with indifference, and noticed at the farther end the solemn professors, who freely moved about between the tables, or sat in large armchairs, I at once felt disappointed in my hope of directing universal attention to myself, and the expression of my face, upon which at home and even in the antechamber had been written compassion for making against my will such a noble and distinguished appearance, was exchanged for an expression of the greatest timidity and even some despair. I even fell into the other extreme, and was very happy when I discovered on a near-by bench a carelessly and uncleanly dressed, gray-haired, though not yet old, man, who was sitting on the last bench, apart from the others. I immediately sat down near him, and began to watch the candidates, and to draw my conclusions.

All kinds of people were there, but, according to the opinion which I then held, they could be distributed into three classes.

There were some who, like myself, had appeared at the examination with their tutors or parents, among their number the younger Ivin, with the familiar Frost, and Ilínka Grap, with his old father. All these had downy chins, wore fine linen, and sat quietly, without opening the books and notes which they had brought with them, and with perceptible timidity looked at the professors and the examination tables. To the second class of candidates belonged young men in Gymnasium uniforms, many of whom already shaved. They were mostly acquainted with each other, spoke loud, called the professors by their names and patronymics, prepared their questions, passed their note-books to each other, climbed across the benches, and brought from the antechamber pastry and sandwiches, which they devoured right there in the hall, by lowering their heads to the level of the benches. Lastly, the candidates of the third class, of whom, however, there were not many, were those who were quite old and wore dress coats, though more frequently simple coats, and were apparently without linen. They carried themselves very seriously, sat apart from the others, and had a sombre aspect. The one who had consoled me by being dressed worse than I belonged to that class. He leaned on both his arms, passing his fingers through his dishevelled gray hair, read a book, and only for a moment gazed at me with not very benevolent, beaming eyes; he frowned gloomily and stretched out his shiny elbow in my direction, so that I should not sit down too close to him. The Gymnasiasts, on the contrary, were too affable, and I was a little afraid of them. One of them put a book into my hands and said: "Give it to him;" another passed by me and said, "Please let me by;" a third leaned against me as against a bench, while

climbing over. All that seemed coarse and disagreeable to me; I considered myself a great deal higher than these Gymnasiasts, and thought they ought not to have permitted themselves such familiarity with me.

At last, names were called. The Gymnasiasts stepped boldly forward, generally answered their questions well, and returned in a happy frame of mind; our kind were much more timid and answered, as I thought, not so well. Of the older ones, some answered superbly, others badly. When Seménov was called, my neighbour with the gray hair and brilliant eyes pushed me roughly and, stepping over my legs, went to the table. As could be seen by the faces of the professors, he answered excellently and boldly. When he returned to his seat, he did not bother about finding out what mark he had received, but quietly took up his note-books and went out. I had shuddered several times at the sound of the voice which called out the names, but my turn had not yet come in the alphabetical order, though names beginning with I were now called. "Ikónin and Ténev" somebody suddenly cried in the professorial corner. A chill ran down my back and hair.

"Whom did they call? Who is Barténev?" they said all about me.

"Ikónin, go, you are called. But who is Barténev, Mordénev? I do not know, I must confess," said a tall, red-cheeked Gymnasiast who was standing behind me.

"You," said St. Jérôme.

"My name is Irténev," I said to the red-cheeked Gymnasiast. "Did they call Irténev?"

"Why, yes! Why don't you go? I declare, what a dandy!" he added under his breath, but so that I could hear his words, as I left the bench. Ahead of me was walking Ikónin, a tall young man some twenty-five years of age, who belonged to the third class of the ancients. He was dressed in a tight olive-coloured dress coat, blue satin necktie, to which ran down from behind his long,

blond hair, carefully combed *à la muzhík*. I had noticed his face, while he was still in his seat. He was not bad-looking, and was talkative; and I was particularly struck by the strange red hair of his beard at the neck, and still more by his strange habit of continually unbuttoning his vest, and scratching his chest under his shirt.

Three professors were sitting at the table, to which Ikónin and I went up; not one of them returned our greeting. A young professor shuffled the tickets like a deck of cards; another professor, with a decoration on his dress coat, looked at a Gymnasiast who was speaking rapidly about Charlemagne, adding "finally" to every word; and a third one, an old man in spectacles, bent down his head, looked at us over his glasses, and pointed to the tickets. I felt that his look was directed simultaneously to Ikónin and to me, and that something in us displeased him (maybe, Ikónin's red hair), because he looked at us simultaneously another time and made an impatient gesture with his head, for us to hurry and take our tickets. I was angry and felt insulted, first, because no one had answered our greeting, secondly, because I was evidently classed with Ikónin as the same kind of candidate, as though one should be prejudiced against me for Ikónin's red hair. I took my ticket without any timidity, and was getting ready to answer; but the professor pointed with his eyes to Ikónin. I read my ticket: I was familiar with the question, and, waiting patiently for my turn, I watched what was going on in front of me. Ikónin was not in the least frightened, and moved forward boldly, somehow with his whole side, to take his ticket, shook his hair, and courageously read what was written down on his ticket. He opened his mouth, as I thought, to answer, when the professor with the decoration, who had just dismissed the Gymnasiast, looked at him. Ikónin seemed to remember something, and stopped. A universal silence lasted for about two minutes.

"Well," said the professor in the spectacles.

Ikónin opened his mouth and again stopped.

"You are not the only person here; so, will you answer, or not?" said the young professor, but Ikónin did not even look at him. He gazed fixedly at the ticket, and did not pronounce a word. The professor in the spectacles looked at him through his glasses and over his glasses, and without his glasses, for he had in the meantime taken them down, carefully cleaned them, and put them on again. Ikónin did not pronounce a word. Suddenly a smile flashed on his face, he shook his hair, again moving his whole side at once, turned to the table, put down the ticket, glanced at all the professors in succession, then at me, turned about, and with a bold step, waving his arms, returned to the bench. The professors looked at each other.

"He is a good one!" said the young professor. "A pay student!"

I moved up to the table, but the professors continued to speak in a whisper to each other, as if they did not even suspect my presence. I was then firmly convinced that all three professors were particularly interested to know whether I should pass my examination, and whether I should pass well, and that they only pretended, to show off their dignity, that it was a matter of indifference to them, and they did not notice me.

When the professor in the spectacles turned to me indifferently and invited me to answer the question, I looked at his eyes and felt a little ashamed for him for his duplicity before me, and at first faltered in my answer; but it soon went easier and easier, and as the question was in Russian history, which I knew excellently, I made a brilliant showing, and, in my desire to let the professors know that I was not Ikónin, and that I should not be mixed up with him, went so far as to offer to take another ticket. But the professor shook his head, and said: "That

will do, sir!" and put down a mark in his book. When I returned to the benches, I immediately learned from the Gymnasiasts, who had found it out, God knows how, that I had received a five mark.

XI.

MY MATHEMATICS EXAMINATION

At the following examinations I had a number of new acquaintances, in addition to Grap, whom I considered unworthy of my friendship, and Ívin, who was rather shy of me. Some of them greeted me. Ikónin was glad to see me, and informed me that he would be reëxamined in history, and that the professor of history had a grudge against him from last year's examination, at which he had made him fail. Seménov, who was entering the same faculty as I, the mathematical, kept away from all the others until the end of his examinations, sat silently by himself, leaning on his arms, and passing his fingers through his gray hair, and answered his examinations excellently. He was second. A Gymnasiast of the First Gymnasium was first. He was a tall, lean fellow of dark complexion, very pale, his cheek tied up with a black necktie, and his brow covered with pimples. His hands were lean and red, with extremely long fingers, and nails so bitten that the ends of his fingers seemed to be tied with threads. All that I thought beautiful and as it should be with a "First Gymnasiast." He spoke to every one like anybody else, and I became acquainted with him, but I judged from his carriage, the movement of his lips and black eyes, that there was something extraordinary, something "magnetic," in them.

I came earlier than usual to my mathematical examination. I knew my subject well, but there were two

questions in algebra which I had concealed from my teacher, and which were entirely unknown to me. Those were, as far as I remember now, the theory of associations, and Newton's binomial. I sat down on the back bench, and looked over the two unfamiliar questions; but not being accustomed to work in a noisy room, and not having sufficient time, a fact of which I was conscious, I was not able to concentrate my mind on my reading.

"Here he is, come here, Nekhlyúdov!" I heard behind me Volódya's familiar voice.

I turned round and saw my brother and Dubkóv, who were walking up to me between the benches with their coats unbuttoned, and swinging their arms. One could immediately see that they were students of the second year, who were at home in the university. The mere aspect of the unbuttoned coats expressed contempt for us fellows, the candidates, and they inspired us, in turn, with envy and respect. I was very much flattered by the thought that all persons about me could see that I was acquainted with two students of the second year, and I swiftly rose to meet them.

Volódya could not keep from expressing his feeling of superiority.

"Oh, you miserable fellow!" he said. "Have you not been examined yet?"

"No."

"What are you reading? Are you not prepared?"

"Not quite in two questions. I do not understand this."

"What? This?" said Volódya, and began to explain Newton's binomial to me, but so rapidly and indistinctly that, reading suspicion of his knowledge in my eyes, he looked at Dmítri, and, reading the same in his eyes, no doubt, he blushed, but continued to talk that which I did not understand.

"No, wait, Volódya! Let me go it over with him, if

there is time," said Dmítri, looking at the professors' corner, and seating himself by my side.

I noticed at once that my friend was in that contented, meek frame of mind which always came over him when he was satisfied with himself, and which I especially admired in him. As he knew mathematics well, and spoke distinctly, he explained the question so clearly, that I remember it even now. No sooner had he finished than St. Jérôme called out in a loud whisper, "*A vous, Nicolas!*" and I followed Ikónin out of the bench, without having had time to touch the other unfamiliar question. I walked up to the table, where two professors were seated, and a Gymnasiast was standing at the blackboard. The Gymnasiast was writing out a formula with much energy, noisily breaking the chalk against the board, and continued to write, although the professor had told him long ago, "That will do," and had ordered us to draw tickets. "What if I should get the theory of associations!" I thought, drawing with trembling fingers a ticket from a soft mass of bits of paper. Ikónin, with the same bold gesture as at the previous examination, swaying with his whole side took the topmost ticket, without much choosing, looked at it, and frowned angrily.

"I get nothing but these little devils!" he grumbled.

I looked at mine. O terror! it was the theory of associations!

"What have you?" asked Ikónin.

I showed him.

"I know that," he said.

"Let us exchange."

"No, it does not make any difference. I do not feel like it," Ikónin had barely whispered when the professor called us to the board.

"Well, all is lost!" I thought. "Instead of a brilliant examination, which I had intended to pass, I shall cover myself with shame for ever, worse than Ikónin." But

suddenly Ikónin turned to me, under the eyes of the professor, pulled the ticket out of my hands, and gave me his. I looked at the ticket. It was Newton's binomial.

The professor was not a very old man, and had a pleasant, intelligent expression, which was produced mainly by the large protruding lower part of his forehead.

"What is that? You are exchanging tickets, gentlemen?" he said.

"No, he just let me look at his, Mr. Professor," Ikónin had the presence of mind to say, and again "Mr. Professor" was the last word which he pronounced in that place; and again, as he passed by me, he glanced at the professors and at me, smiled and shrugged his shoulders, with an expression which said:

"It's all right, my friend!" (I later learned that it was the third year Ikónin had been coming to the entrance examinations.)

I answered my question excellently, for I had just had it explained to me, — the professor even said that I had passed it better than could be expected, and gave me a five mark.

XII.

THE LATIN EXAMINATION

EVERYTHING went well up to the time of the Latin examination. The bundled-up Gymnasiast was first, Seménov second, I third. I even began to grow proud and seriously to think that, in spite of my youth, I was somebody.

Even at the first examination all told with trembling of the Latin professor, who was a beast and took delight in the ruin of young men, particularly pay students, and who, it was asserted, never spoke but in Latin or Greek. St. Jérôme, who had been my teacher of Latin, encouraged me, and I myself thought I was prepared not worse than the others, since I had translated Cicero and a few odes of Horace without a dictionary, and knew Zumpt by heart. We heard all the morning of nothing but the ruin of those who were examined before me; to one the professor gave zero, to another one, a third canditate he called names and wanted to put out, and so on. Only Seménov and the "First" Gymnasiast walked out calmly as before, and returned, having received five each. I had a presentiment of my misfortune, when Ikónin and I were called to the small table at which the terrible professor was seated all by himself. The terrible professor was a small, lean, sallow man, with long, greasy hair, and a very pensive countenance. He handed to Ikónin a volume of Cicero's speeches, and told him to translate. To my great

astonishment, Ikónin not only read, but even translated a few lines with the aid of the professor, who helped him out. As I felt my superiority before so weak a rival, I could not help smiling, even somewhat contemptuously, when it came to the analysis, and Ikónin, as formerly, was merged in inextricable silence. I had intended to win the professor's favour with that intelligent, slightly derisive smile, but it turned out quite differently.

"You, no doubt, know it better, since you smile," said the professor to me in bad Russian. "We shall see. Now, you tell it."

Later I learned that the professor of Latin favoured Ikónin, and that Ikónin was even living at his house. I immediately answered the question on syntax which had been put to Ikónin, but the professor assumed a sad expression and turned away from me.

"Very well, sir, your turn will come, and we shall see what you know," he said, without looking at me, and began to explain to Ikónin the question he had asked him.

"That will do," he added, and I saw him mark Ikónin four in the book of marks. "Well," I thought, "he is not at all so severe as they said." After Ikónin had gone, he for a full five minutes, which appeared to me like five hours, arranged the books and tickets, cleared his nose, straightened out the chairs, threw himself into one, stared at the hall, around him, and everywhere, only not at me. All that feigning did not seem sufficient to him, so he opened a book and pretended he was reading it, as if I did not exist for him at all. I moved up and coughed.

"Oh, yes! You! Well, translate something," he said, handing me a book; "or no, you had better take this." He turned the pages of Horace, and opened it at a passage which, I was sure, nobody could ever translate.

"I did not prepare this," I said.

"Oh, you want to answer only what you have learned by rote! Very well! No, you translate this!"

I managed to make some sense out of it, but the professor shook his head at every questioning glance of mine, and, sighing, answered only "No." At last, he closed the book; he did it so swiftly and nervously that he caught his finger between the leaves; he angrily pulled it out, gave me a ticket in grammar, and, leaning back in his chair, was most ominously silent. I started to answer, but the expression of his face fettered my tongue, and everything I said sounded wrong to me.

"Not that, not at all that," he suddenly burst out in his horrible pronunciation, rapidly changing his position, leaning on the table and playing with his gold ring, which fitted badly on the lean finger of his left hand. "Gentlemen, it will not do to be prepared in such a manner for a higher institution of learning: you are thinking only of wearing a uniform with a blue collar, and you snap up the tops of things, and imagine that you can be students; no, gentlemen, you must begin your subjects in a thorough manner," and so forth in the same strain.

All during his speech, which was pronounced in very faulty language, I looked with dull attention at his drooping eyes. At first I was tormented by the disappointment that I should not be third, then by the fear that I should not pass my examination at all; finally there was added to this the feeling of injustice, offended self-esteem, and undeserved humiliation; in addition, a contempt for the professor for not meeting my conception of a man *comme il faut*, which I discovered when I saw his short, strong, and round nails, still more fanned these feelings and made them venomous. Looking at me, and noticing my quivering lips and eyes filled with tears, he evidently explained my agitation as a request that he should give me a better mark, and, as though taking pity on me, he said (in the presence of another professor, who had just stepped up):

"Very well, I shall give you a pass mark" (which meant two), "though you do not deserve it, but I do so out of consideration for your youth, and in the hope that you will not be so frivolous in the university."

The last sentence, which was said in the presence of a strange professor, who looked at me as if to say, "Yes, you see, young man?" completely undid me. There was a minute when my eyes were clouded: the terrible professor, with his table, appeared to me to be sitting a long distance off, and the wild idea passed through my mind with terrible, one-sided clearness: "Suppose — what would happen?" But, for some reason, I did not do it; on the contrary, I bowed very respectfully, though unconsciously, to both the professors, and, smiling softly, the same smile, I thought, Ikónin had smiled, went away from the table.

That injustice affected me so powerfully that, if I had been free to do as I chose, I should not have gone to the other examinations. I lost every ambition (I no longer could hope to be third), and I passed all the following examinations without the least preparation or anxiety. I received as an average four with a fraction, but that no longer interested me. I decided, and proved it to my full satisfaction, that it was very stupid, and even *mauvais genre* to try to be first, but that one ought to endeavour not to have one's standing either too good or too bad, just like Volódya. I made up my mind to stick to this plan in the university, though in this I departed for the first time from the opinion of my friend.

I now thought only of my uniform, the cocked hat, my own vehicle, my own room, and, above all, my personal freedom.

XIII

I AM A GROWN-UP MAN

HOWEVER, these thoughts had their charm, too.

When I returned on the 8th of May from my last examination, in religion, I found at home an apprentice from Rozánov, who had before brought a basted uniform and a coat of smooth black cloth with a sheen, and had marked the lapels with chalk; he now brought the completed suit, with shining gold buttons, wrapped in papers.

I put on the suit and found it beautiful, in spite of St. Jérôme's assurance that the back of the coat wrinkled. I went down-stairs with a self-satisfied smile, which involuntarily spread over my whole countenance, and went to Volódya's room, feeling, though pretending not to notice, the glances of the servants, which were eagerly directed toward me from the antechamber and the corridor. Gavrílo, the majordomo, caught up with me in the parlour, congratulated me on my entering the university, presented to me, by papa's order, four twenty-five rouble bills, and said that, also by papa's order, from that day on coachman Kuzmá, a vehicle, and the bay, Beauty, were at my entire disposal. I was so rejoiced at this almost unexpected happiness that I was unable to feign indifference before Gavrílo, and, after a moment of confusion and hesitation, I said the first thing that occurred to me, — I think it was, "Beauty is an excellent trotter."

I glanced at the heads that stuck through the doors of the antechamber and the corridor, and, not being able to

hold myself in any longer, raced through the parlour in my new overcoat with the shining gold buttons. As I entered Volódya's room, I heard behind me the voices of Dubkóv and Nekhlyúdov, who had come to congratulate me and to propose that we drive out for dinner and drink champagne in honour of my entering the university. Dmítri said to me that, though he did not like to drink champagne, he would drive out with us to-day, in order to drink "brotherhood" with me. Dubkóv said that I somehow resembled a colonel; Volódya did not congratulate me, and very drily said that two days later we could go into the country. Although he was glad of my success, it looked as if he were a little annoyed at my being now just such a grown person as he. St. Jérôme, who also came to see us, said in high-flown terms that his duty was now ended, but that he had done all he could, and that the next day he should move to the count's house. In answer to all they told me, I felt that an involuntary, sweet, happy, stupidly self-satisfied smile was blooming forth on my face, and I noticed that that smile communicated itself to all who spoke with me.

And thus I had no longer a tutor, I possessed my own vehicle, my name was printed in the list of the students, I wore a sword with a sword-knot, — sentinels might present arms to me — I was a young man, and, I am sure, I was happy.

We decided to dine at Yar's at five o'clock; but as Volódya had driven out to Dubkóv's house, and Dmítri, as usual, had disappeared, saying that he had some business before dinner, I was able to pass two hours as I chose. I walked about the rooms for some time, and looked in all the mirrors, now with my coat buttoned, now unbuttoned, now buttoned with the upper button only, and always it looked beautiful to me. Then, though I had scruples about evincing too much joy, I could not restrain myself, and went to the stable and carriage shed

to look at Beauty, Kuzmá, and the vehicle; then I returned and began to walk through the rooms, looking in the mirrors and counting the money in my pocket, and all the time smiling blissfully. But not an hour passed before I felt lonely and sorry that nobody saw me in such a magnificent state, and I needed motion and activity. So I ordered the vehicle out, and decided that I had better go to Blacksmith Bridge, to make some purchases.

I recalled that Volódya, upon entering the university, had bought lithographs of horses by Victor Adam, and tobacco, and a pipe, and it seemed to me necessary to do likewise.

While the eyes of all were turned on me from every side, and the sun brilliantly shone upon my buttons, upon the cockade of my hat, and upon my sword, I arrived at Blacksmith Bridge, and stopped at the picture shop of Dazziaro. I looked all around me, and walked in. I did not want to buy Adam's horses, lest I should be accused of aping Volódya, but, being abashed, and wishing to choose as quickly as possible, in order to save the obliging clerk trouble, I took a water-colour painting of a female head which was standing in the window, and paid twenty roubles for it. Yet, though I paid twenty roubles, I felt ashamed at having troubled two beautifully dressed clerks with such a trifle, and, at the same time, I thought they did not pay me the proper respect. As I was desirous of letting them know who I was, I turned my attention to a silver thing that lay under a glass, and upon learning that it was a pencil-case, costing eighteen roubles, I asked to have it wrapped up, and paid for it. Having found out that good pipe-stems and tobacco could be purchased in the adjoining tobacco-shop, I politely bowed to the two clerks and walked out into the street, with the picture under my arm. In the neighbouring shop, on the sign of which was painted a negro smoking a cigar, I bought, also from a desire not to imitate any-

body, not Zhukóv's, but Turkish tobacco, a Turkish pipe, and two linden and briar pipe-stems. As I left the shop and walked to the vehicle, I saw Seménov, who was dressed in citizen's clothes and, with drooping head, was walking rapidly along the sidewalk. I felt annoyed because he did not recognize me. I called out quite loud, "Drive up!" and, seating myself in the vehicle, caught up with him.

"Good day," I said.

"My regards," he answered, and continued to walk.

"I see you are not in your uniform!" I said to him.

Seménov stopped, blinked, and showed his teeth, as though it pained him to look into the sun, but, in reality, to show his indifference to my vehicle and uniform, gazed at me in silence, and walked on.

From Blacksmith Bridge I drove to a confectioner's on the Tver Boulevard, and though I tried to feign that it was the newspapers that interested me there, I could not keep myself from eating one pastry after another. Although I felt ashamed before the gentleman who kept on looking at me from behind his paper, I devoured in rapid succession some eight cakes of every kind which was to be found in the shop.

When I arrived at home I felt some heartburn; but I paid no attention to it, and began to examine my purchases. I was so disgusted with my picture that I not only did not put it in a frame, but concealed it behind the bureau, where Volódya could not see it. Nor did I like a pencil-case at home; so I put it in the table, consoling myself, however, with the thought that it was of silver, a fine piece of work, and very useful for a student. But I decided at once to put to use the smoking paraphernalia, and to test them.

I opened the quarter-pound package, carefully filled the Turkish pipe with the brown, finely cut Turkish tobacco, placed upon it a burning piece of tinder, and,

taking the stem between the middle and ring fingers, — a position of the hand which I particularly admired, — began to puff.

The odour of the tobacco was very pleasant, but there was a bitter taste in my mouth, and the smoke choked me. I took courage, for quite awhile puffed ahead, and tried to make smoke rings, and to breathe in the smoke. The room was soon filled with bluish clouds, the pipe began to snarl, the hot tobacco bubbled, and I felt a bitterness in my mouth and a slight whirling in my head. I wanted to stop, and just to take a look at myself in the mirror, but, to my astonishment, my legs tottered; the room went round in a circle, and when I looked into the mirror, to which I had dragged myself with difficulty, I noticed that my face was as pale as a sheet. No sooner did I seat myself on the sofa, than I felt such nausea and weakness that I concluded the pipe was poisonous to me, and that I was sure to die. I was frightened in earnest, and was about to call for help and send for the doctor.

This fear did not last. I soon saw what the matter was, and for a long time lay, weak and with a terrible headache, upon the sofa, looking with dull attention at the trade-mark of Bostanzhóglo which was represented on the quarter-pound package, at the pipe which was lying upon the floor, at the tobacco lumps, and at what was left of the pastry, and I thought in disappointment and sadness: "Evidently I am not yet a grown-up man, if I am not able to smoke like others, and it is not fated that I should hold, like others, my pipe between my middle and ring fingers, and puff, and pass the smoke through my blond moustache."

Dmítri, who came for me after four o'clock, found me in that unfortunate condition. But after drinking a glass of water, I was almost entirely well, and ready to go with him.

"What good do you find in smoking?" he said, looking at the traces of smoking. "This is nothing but foolishness and useless waste of money. I have taken a vow never to smoke. However, come! We have to call for Dubkóv yet."

XIV.

WHAT DUBKÓV'S AND VOLÓDYA'S OCCUPATIONS WERE

THE moment Dmítri entered my room, I saw by his face, by his gait, and by his peculiar gesture, which he made every time he was out of sorts, and which consisted in winking and jerking his head awry, as if to rearrange his necktie, that he was in his cold and stubborn frame of mind, which came over him when he was dissatisfied with himself, and which always had a chilling effect upon my attachment for him. Of late I had begun to observe and judge the character of my friend, but our friendship did not suffer from it in the least: it was still so young and strong that from whatever side I looked at Dmítri I could not help but consider him perfection. There were two different men in him, and they both seemed beautiful to me. One, whom I loved passionately, was good, kind, meek, merry, and conscious of these amiable qualities. When he was in that mood, his whole exterior, the sound of his voice, and all his movements seemed to say, "I am meek and virtuous, and I take pleasure in being meek and virtuous, and you may see it all." The other, whom I had just begun to discover, and before whose majesty I bowed, was a cold man, severe to himself and to others, proud, fanatically religious, and pedantically virtuous. At that particular moment he was that second man.

With a frankness, which constituted a necessary condition of our relation, I told him, when we seated ourselves in the vehicle, that I was pained and sad to see him in

such a heavy and disagreeable frame of mind on a day which was so happy for me.

"No doubt something has annoyed you. Why do you not tell me?" I asked him.

"Nikólenka!" he answered in a leisurely manner, nervously jerking his head and winking, "if I promised you that I should not conceal anything from you, you have no cause for suspecting my secretiveness. A person cannot always be in the same mood, and if anything has annoyed me, I am not able to account for it!"

"What a wonderfully frank and honest character his is," I thought, and did not continue the conversation.

We reached Dubkóv's in silence. Dubkóv's apartments were unusually fine, or at least seemed so to me. There were everywhere rugs, pictures, curtains, gay wall-paper, wicker chairs, large armchairs; on the wall hung rifles, pistols, tobacco pouches, and card-paper animal heads. At the sight of that cabinet, I saw at once whom Volódya was imitating in fixing up his room. We found Dubkóv and Volódya at cards. A stranger (a man evidently not of much importance, to judge by his modest position) sat at the table and attentively watched the game. Dubkóv had on a silk dressing-gown and soft shoes. Volódya, without his coat, was sitting opposite him, on the sofa, and, to judge by his flushed face and the dissatisfied and cursory glance which he cast upon us, while tearing himself away from his cards for a second, was absorbed in the game. When he saw me, he blushed even more.

"Well, it is your deal," he said to Dubkóv. I understood that he was ill at ease, because I had found out that he played at cards. But there was no consternation in his look, — it simply said: "Yes, I play, and you are surprised because you are young. This is not only not bad, but quite the thing at our years."

I felt it and understood it at once.

Dubkóv, however, did not deal the cards, but rose,

pressed our hands, gave us chairs, and offered us pipes, which we refused.

"So here he is, our diplomatist, the cause of our celebration," said Dubkóv. "Upon my word, he looks very much like a colonel."

"Hm!" I muttered, again feeling a stupidly self-satisfied smile spreading on my face.

I respected Dubkóv as only a sixteen-year-old boy can respect a twenty-seven-year-old adjutant, whom all the big people called an exceedingly fine young man, who danced well and spoke French, and who, at heart despising my youth, endeavoured to conceal this feeling.

In spite of all my respect for him, it was, God knows why, during the whole time of our acquaintance, a hard and awkward matter for me to look into his eyes. I noticed later that there were three kinds of people, into whose eyes I found it hard to look straight: those who were considerably worse than I; those who were considerably better than I; and those to whom I did not dare to tell a thing which both of us knew. It may be, Dubkóv was better than I, or it may be, he was worse, but this much was certain, he lied a great deal, without acknowledging the fact, and I had noticed this weakness in him, but, naturally, did not have the courage to tell him so.

"Let us play another score," said Volódya, jerking his shoulder like papa, and shuffling the cards.

"Why do you insist?" said Dubkóv. "We could finish it later. However, let us have it!"

While they played I watched their hands. Volódya had a beautiful large hand, and the division of the thumb and the curvature of the other fingers, as he held the cards, so resembled papa's, that I thought for a moment Volódya was purposely holding his hands that way, in order to resemble a man; but when I observed his face, it was evident that he was thinking of nothing but the

game. Dubkóv's hands, on the contrary, were small, fleshy, bent inwardly, very agile, and with soft fingers, — just the kind of hands upon which rings are worn, and which belong to people who like to work with them, and love to have beautiful things.

Volódya must have lost, for the gentleman, who was looking into his cards, remarked that Vladímir Petróvich had terribly bad luck, and Dubkóv reached for his portfolio, wrote something down in it, and, showing it to Volódya, said: "Right?"

"Yes," said Volódya, looking with feigned indifference at the note-book, "now let us go!"

Volódya took Dubkóv with him, and Dmítri took me in his phaeton.

"What were they playing?" I asked Dmítri.

"Piquet. A stupid game, but, as for that, all games are stupid."

"Do they play for large stakes?"

"No, not large, but it is bad all the same."

"And do you not play?"

"No, I have vowed not to play; and Dubkóv is bound to win from anybody."

"But that is not nice of him," I said. "Volódya, no doubt, plays worse than he."

"Of course, it is not nice; but there is nothing bad about it. Dubkóv likes to play and knows how to play, but he is an excellent man for all that."

"I did not mean to say —" I said.

"There is no reason for having a bad opinion of him, for he is really a fine man. I love him very much, and shall always love him, in spite of his weakness."

It appeared to me, for some reason, that the fact that Dmítri so warmly defended Dubkóv proved that he no longer loved and respected him, but did not acknowledge this from stubbornness, in order that no one might accuse him of inconstancy. He was one of those men who love

their friends all their lives, not so much because their friends please them continually, as because they consider it dishonourable to give up a man, after they have taken a liking for him, even if it be by mistake.

XV.

I AM CONGRATULATED

DUBKÓV and Volódya knew all the people at Yar's by their names, and all, from the doorkeeper to the proprietor, treated them with great respect. We were shown at once to a separate room, and we had a wonderful dinner, which Dubkóv selected from a French menu. A bottle of iced champagne, upon which I tried to look with entire indifference, was already prepared. The dinner passed very agreeably and merrily, although Dubkóv, as was his habit, told a lot of strange incidents, which he claimed were true, — among them, how his grandmother once killed, with a blunderbuss, three brigands who had attacked her (which made me blush and, lowering my eyes, turn away from him), and although Volódya evidently trembled every time I began to say something (which was quite unnecessary, for, so far as I remember, I did not say anything out of the way). When the champagne was brought, all congratulated me, and, crossing hands, I drank "brotherhood" with Dubkóv and Dmítri, and we kissed each other. As I did not know to whom the bottle of champagne belonged (I later learned that it was the whole company's), and as I wanted to treat my friends with my own money, which I kept on fingering in my pocket, I softly fetched out a ten-rouble bill and, calling up a waiter, gave it to him, and ordered him in a whisper, but so that they all could hear, for they were looking at me in silence, to bring us another half-bottle

of champagne. Volódya blushed, jerked his shoulder, and looked frightened at me and at everybody, so that I felt I had made a mistake, but the half-bottle was brought, and we drank it with much enjoyment.

We continued to have a jolly time. Dubkóv lied without cessation; Volódya, too, told funny stories, — he told them better than I had ever expected him to; and we all laughed a great deal. The character of their fun, that is, Volódya's and Dubkóv's, consisted in the imitation and exaggeration of certain anecdotes: "Have you been abroad?" asked one, and the other would answer: "No, I have not, but my brother plays the fiddle." To every question they answered each other in that way, and even without being questioned, they tried to connect the most incompatible things, and spoke that nonsense with most serious faces, — and the result was very funny. I began to see through their jokes, and wanted myself to say something funny, but all looked embarrassed and tried not to gaze at me while I was speaking, and the joke fell flat. Dubkóv said: "You are off, brother diplomatist;" but I was so happy from the champagne I had drunk, and from being in the company of big people, that this remark barely touched me. Only Dmítri, who had been drinking as much as any of us, remained in his severe, solemn mood, which to a certain extent subdued the general merriment.

"Now, listen, gentlemen!" said Dubkóv. "After dinner we must take the diplomat into our hands. How about driving to 'aunty'? We will fix him there!"

"You know Nekhlyúdov will not go with us," said Volódya.

"Intolerable saint! You intolerable saint!" said Dubkóv, turning to him. "Come along; you will see 'aunty' is a nice lady."

"Not only will I not go, but I will not let him either," answered Dmítri, blushing.

"Whom? The diplomat? You want to, diplomat? Not? Really, he all brightened up when we mentioned 'aunty.'"

"I will not exactly forbid his going," continued Dmítri, rising from his seat, and beginning to pace the room, without looking at me, "but I advise him not to, and I do not want him to go. He is not a child now, and if he wishes to go there, he can do so without you. And you, Dubkóv, must be ashamed of your bad act, so you want others to do likewise."

"What wrong is there," said Dubkóv, winking at Volódya, "in inviting you all to 'aunty's' for a cup of tea? Well, if you do not like to go with us, Volódya and I will go alone. Volódya, do you want to?"

"Hm, hm," Volódya said in affirmation, "let us drive down there, and then we will return to my room to continue the piquet."

"Well, will you go with them?" said Dmítri, walking up to me.

"No," I answered, moving up on the sofa, so as to give him a seat near me, which he took. "I do not want to, anyway, and if you advise me not to, I certainly will not go."

"No," I added later, "I told an untruth when I said I did not want to go with them; but I am glad I am not going."

"That is right," he said, "live your own life, and do not dance to somebody else's fiddle. That is best."

This short discussion did not in the least curtail our pleasure, but even increased it. Dmítri suddenly fell into my favourite meek mood. The consciousness of a good act, as I often observed later, always produced that effect upon him. He was satisfied with himself for having saved me. He grew very jolly, asked for another bottle of champagne (which was against his rules), called in a strange gentleman, whom he began to fill with wine,

sang "Gaudeamus igitur," asked all to sing the refrain, and proposed to us that we go out driving to Sokólniki, to which suggestion Dubkóv replied that this was too sentimental.

"Let us have a good time," said Dmítri, smiling. "In honour of his entering the university I will, upon my word, drink myself drunk for the first time in my life." This merriment was rather odd in Dmítri. He resembled a tutor or a good father, who is satisfied with his children, and wants to give them pleasure, and at the same time prove to them that one can enjoy himself decently and honestly; still, this sudden merriment acted contagiously upon me and upon the others, the more so since each of us had already consumed a half-bottle of champagne.

In this happy frame of mine I went into the large room, to light the cigarette which Dubkóv had offered me.

When I rose from my seat, I noticed that my head was a little dizzy, and that my legs walked and my hands remained in a natural position only as long as I thought of them with concentration. Otherwise, my legs had a sideways leaning, and my arms cut capers. I directed all my attention to these limbs, ordered my arms to be lifted to button my coat, to smooth my hair (doing which my elbows flew up dreadfully), and commanded my legs to walk to the door, which they executed, but they stopped either too hard, or too gently, especially my left leg, which rose on tiptoe. A voice called out to me: "Where are you going? They will bring a candle!" I guessed that the voice belonged to Volódya, and I experienced a certain pleasure at the thought that I had guessed it, but I only smiled in reply, and went on.

XVI.

THE QUARREL

In the large room a short, thickset gentleman in citizen's clothes, with a red moustache, was sitting at a small table and eating. By his side sat a tall, dark-haired man without a moustache. They were speaking in French. Their gaze disconcerted me, but I decided, nevertheless, to light my cigarette at the candle which was standing in front of them. Looking about me, so as not to meet their glances, I walked up to the table, and began to light my cigarette. When the cigarette burned, I held out no longer, but cast a look on the gentleman who was dining. His gray eyes were directed fixedly and threateningly at me. I was about to turn away, when the red moustache came in motion, and he uttered in French: "I object to smoking, sir, when I am at dinner."

I muttered something unintelligible.

"Yes; I object," continued severely the gentleman with the moustache, casting a cursory glance upon the gentleman without the moustache, as if inviting him to watch his belabouring me. "And I do not like, sir, people who are so impolite as to smoke right before my face, — I do not like them."

I immediately made out that the gentleman was badgering me, but it appeared to me at first that I was very much to blame.

"I did not think it would incommode you," I said.

"Oh, you did not think you were a boor, but I did!" cried the gentleman.

"What right have you to yell?" I said, feeling that he was insulting me, and growing angry myself.

"This right, that I will not permit any one to fail in his respect to me; and I will always teach such fine fellows as you a lesson. What is your name, sir, and where do you live?"

I was furious, my lips quivered, and my breath choked me. I felt myself guilty, no doubt, for having drunk too much champagne, and I did not rudely insult the gentleman, but, on the contrary, my lips in the most humble fashion gave him my name and address.

"My name is Kolpikóv, dear sir, and you had better be more civil next time. You will hear from me" (*vous aurez de mes nouvelles*), he concluded, speaking all the time in French.

I answered only, "Very glad," trying to give my voice as much firmness as possible, turned about, and went to our room with my cigarette, which had in the meantime gone out.

I did not say a word of what had happened, either to my brother, or to my friend, particularly since they were warmly discussing something, but seated myself, all alone, in a corner, and began to ruminate over the strange incident. "You are a boor, sir" (*un mal élevé, monsieur*) resounded in my ears, ever more provoking me. My intoxication was all passed. When I reflected how I had acted in that affair, I was suddenly struck by the terrible idea that I had acted as a coward. What right did he have to attack me? Why did he not say simply that it incommoded him? It is he who is guilty. Why, when he told me that I was a boor, did I not tell him: "A boor, sir, is he who permits himself any rudeness," or why did I not yell at him: "Shut up!" That would have been excellent. Why did I not call him out to

a duel? No, I did not do any of these things, but swallowed the insult like any mean coward. "You are a boor, sir!" dinned provokingly in my ears. "No, it cannot be left so," I thought, with the firm determination of going again to that gentleman and telling him something terrible, and even knocking him down with the candlestick, if the opportunity offered itself. I considered this latter intention with great pleasure, and entered the large room, not, however, without a great deal of fear. Fortunately, Mr. Kolpikóv was gone; there was no one there but a waiter who was cleaning up the table. I wanted to communicate to the waiter what had happened, and to explain to him that I was not to blame for it, but I reconsidered the matter, and returned to our room in the gloomiest frame of mind.

"What is the matter with our diplomat?" said Dubkóv. "He is, no doubt, deciding the fate of Europe!"

"Oh, leave me alone!" I said, turning away morosely. After that I paced the room and reflected about Dubkóv, who, I concluded, was not at all a good man. "What sense is there in those eternal jokes, and in calling me 'diplomat?' There is no fun in it. All he cares for is to win from Volódya at cards, and to call on some 'aunty.' And there is nothing agreeable about him. Everything he says is a lie, or a mean remark, and he is always ready to ridicule a person. I think he is simply a stupid fellow, and a bad man." I passed some five minutes in these reflections, my hostile feeling for Dubkóv increasing all the time. Dubkóv, however, paid no attention to me, which provoked me still more. I was even angry with Volódya and Dmítri, because they were conversing with him.

"Do you know what, gentlemen? We ought to pour water over the diplomat," suddenly said Dubkóv, glancing at me with a smile which to me appeared derisive and even treacherous, "for he is no good; upon my word, he is no good!"

"Water ought to be poured over you! You are no good yourself," I answered, smiling maliciously and forgetting that we were speaking "thou" to each other.

This answer evidently surprised Dubkóv, but he turned away with indifference, and continued his conversation with Volódya and Dmítri.

I tried to take part in their discussion, but felt that I could not feign, and again betook myself to my corner, where I remained till our departure.

When we had paid our bills and were putting on our overcoats, Dubkóv turned to Dmítri: "Well, where will Orestes and Pylades go? I suppose home, to talk about love. Very well, but we will call on dear 'aunty,' — that is better than your sour friendship."

"How dare you speak so, and make fun of us?" I suddenly called out, walking up close to him, and waving my arms. "How dare you make fun of feelings which you do not understand? I shall not permit you to do that. Shut up!" I called out, and grew myself silent, not knowing what to say further, and breathless with emotion. Dubkóv was surprised at first, then wanted to smile and take it as a joke, but finally, to my great amazement, he was frightened and lowered his eyes.

"I am not making fun of you or your feelings. I was just talking," he said, evasively.

"That's it!" I cried, but at the same time I felt ashamed of myself and sorry for Dubkóv, whose red, disconcerted countenance expressed genuine suffering.

"What is the matter with you?" spoke Volódya and Dmítri at once. "Nobody intended to insult you."

"No, he wanted to offend me."

"I declare, your brother is a terrible gentleman," said Dubkóv, just as he was walking out of the door, so that he could not hear what I would say.

It may be, I should have run after him, to tell him a lot of rude things, but just then the waiter who had been

present during my affair with Kolpikóv, handed me my overcoat, and I at once quieted down, simulating, before Dmítri, only just enough anger not to make my sudden calm appear too strange. Next day I met Dubkóv in Volódya's room. We did not mention the affair, but spoke "you" to each other, and it became even harder for us to look into each other's eyes.

The memory of my quarrel with Kolpikóv, who gave me *de ses nouvelles* neither on the following day, nor later, was for many years terribly vivid and oppressive to me. I shuddered and shrieked for five years to come every time I thought of the unavenged insult, but consoled myself whenever I recalled with self-satisfaction how bravely I had conducted myself in my affair with Dubkóv. It was not until much later that I began to look in an entirely different way upon this matter, and with comical pleasure to recall my quarrel with Kolpikóv, and to regret the undeserved insult which I had offered the good fellow Dubkóv.

When, that very evening, I told Dmítri of the episode with Kolpikóv, whose appearance I described to him in detail, he was greatly surprised.

"Yes, it is the same man!" he said. "Think of it! this Kolpikóv is a well-known scoundrel and gambler, but, above all, a coward, who was kicked out of the army by his friends, for having received a box on his ears and refusing to fight for it. Where did he get that boldness from?" he added, looking at me with a kindly smile. "He did not call you anything else but 'boor'?"

"No," I answered, blushing.

"It is not good, but it is no great misfortune!" Dmítri consoled me.

Not until much later in my life, when I was able to reflect upon this matter calmly, did I make the very plausible suggestion that Kolpikóv had at last felt, after many years, that it was safe to attack me, and so he

avenged upon me, in the presence of his friend without the moustaches, the box on his ears which he had once received, just as I had avenged his "boor" on innocent Dubkóv.

XVII.

I AM GETTING READY TO MAKE CALLS

WHEN I awoke the next morning, my first thought was of the incident with Kolpikóv. I growled again and ran up and down my room, but there was nothing to be done; besides, it was the last day I was to pass in Moscow, and, according to papa's order, I had to make the calls which he had written out for me on a piece of paper. Papa's care of us consisted not so much in morality and education as in the worldly relations. On the paper was written, in his broken, rapid handwriting: "1, on Prince Iván Ivánovich, by all means; 2, on the Ivins, by all means; 3, on Prince Mikháylo; 4, on Princess Nekhlyúdov and Princess Valákhin, if you have time." And, of course, on the curator, the rector, and the professors.

Dmítri dissuaded me from making the last visits, saying that it was not only unnecessary, but even improper; but on the rest I had to call by all means on that day. The first two visits, after which was written "by all means," frightened me more especially. Prince Iván Ivánovich was general-in-chief, old, rich, and unmarried; consequently I, a sixteen-year-old student, should have to meet him personally, which, I surmised, could not be flattering for me. The Ivins also were rich, and their father was some kind of an important general in the civil service, who had called upon us, during grandmother's lifetime, but once. After grandmother's death, I noticed that the youngest Ivin kept aloof from us, and put on

airs. The eldest Ivin, so I heard, had finished his course of jurisprudence, and was serving somewhere in St. Petersburg; the second, Sergyéy, whom I had worshipped once, was also in St. Petersburg, a big, fat cadet in the Corps of the Pages.

In my youth I not only did not like any relations with people who considered themselves higher than I, but such relations were unbearably painful to me, on account of my continuous fear of insult, and of my exertion of all my mental powers, in order to prove to them my independence. But, since I was not going to fulfil papa's order in regard to the last point, I had to extenuate my guilt by calling on the others. I walked to and fro in my room, examining my clothes, which were laid out on chairs, and my sword and hat, and was getting ready to go, when old Grap arrived with Ilínka to congratulate me. Father Grap was a Russified German, unbearably repulsive, fawning, and very often intoxicated. He used to call only when he wanted to ask for something, and papa sometimes took him to his cabinet, but he never was invited to dinner with us. His humility and beggary were so welded with a certain external kindliness and attachment for our house, that all accounted his apparent loyalty to us as a great credit to him, but I could not make myself like the man, and whenever he spoke I felt ashamed for him.

I was very much dissatisfied with the arrival of these guests, and did not attempt to conceal my dissatisfaction. I had grown, like the rest, to look at Ilínka from on high, and he had accustomed himself to consider us right in doing so, which made it rather unpleasant for me, when I saw him just such a student as myself. It seemed to me that he, too, had some scruples in my presence on account of this equality. I greeted him coldly and did not ask either him or his father to be seated, feeling rather awkward about inviting them to do what they might

do without my invitation, and ordered up the carriage. Ilínka was a good, scrupulously honest, and very clever young man, but he was what is called a cranky fellow; he used to be continually overcome, and apparently without any cause, by some extreme moods: he either grew lackadaisical, or sarcastic, or peevish, for the merest trifle; even now, he was in the last frame of mind. He said nothing, maliciously looked at me and at his father, and only, when addressed, smiled his submissive, forced smile, under which he was in the habit of concealing all his feelings, but especially the feeling of shame for his father, which he could not help experiencing before us.

"Yes, sir, Nikoláy Petróvich," said the old man to me, following me all over the room while I was dressing, and reverentially fingering a silver snuff-box which grandmother had presented to him. "The moment I found out from my son that you had passed your examinations so excellently, — everybody knows what a mind you have, — I at once hastened to congratulate you, my friend. I used to carry you on my shoulders, you know, and God knows that I love you all like my own family, and Ilínka asked me to take him to you. He, too, is used to you."

Ilínka sat all that time silent at the window, ostensibly examining my cocked hat, and just audibly muttering something to himself.

"Well, I wanted to ask you, Nikoláy Petróvich," continued the old man, "whether my Ilínka passed good examinations. He told me he would be with you, so do not abandon him. Look after him, and advise him."

"Yes, he passed excellently," I answered, looking at Ilínka, who felt my glance resting upon him, and blushed, and ceased to move his lips.

"And may one pass the day with you?" said the old man, with a timid smile, as though he was afraid of me, and keeping so close to me, wherever I moved, that the odour of liquor and tobacco, with which he was saturated,

did not leave me for a second. I was angry, because he placed me in such a false position in regard to his son, and because he distracted my attention from an exceedingly important occupation, that of dressing; but, in particular, that odour of brandy so pursued me that I was all put out, and I told him coldly that I could not be with Ilínka, as I should not be at home all day.

"Father, you wanted to go to sister," said Ilínka, smiling, and not looking at me, "and I have some business, too."

I felt even more annoyed and ashamed, and, to soften my refusal, hastened to add that I should not be at home, because I had to be at the house of Prince Iván Ivánovich, of Princess Kornákov, of Ivin, the one who occupied such a distinguished place, and that I should, no doubt, dine with Princess Nekhlyúdov. I thought that they would not have any cause for annoyance, if they knew on what distinguished people I was going to call. When they got ready to go, I invited Ilínka to come to see me some other time; but Ilínka only muttered something and smiled with a forced expression. I could see that he would never again set foot in my room.

I soon after drove out to make my calls. Volódya, whom I had asked early in the morning to go with me, in order that I might not feel so awkward, had refused, under the pretext that it would be too sentimental an affair for two brothers to travel together in one small vehicle.

XVIII.

THE VALÁKHINS

AND so I drove out myself. The first visit, in order of location, was at the house of the Valákhins, on Sívtsov Vrazhók. I had not seen Sónichka for three years, and my love for her had, naturally, passed away long ago, but in my soul was left a vivid and touching memory of my childish love. During those three years I had sometimes thought of her so clearly and with such strength of feeling, that I had shed tears and felt myself again in love, but such a mood lasted only a few minutes, and did not soon return.

I knew that Sónichka had been abroad with her mother, where they remained two years or more, and where, so I was told, they had had an accident in a stage-coach, during which Sónichka's face was all cut up by the broken glass of the coach, whereby she had lost her good looks. On my way to their house I vividly recalled Sónichka of old, and wondered how I should find her now. On account of her two years' sojourn abroad, I somehow imagined her to have grown exceedingly tall, with a beautiful figure, serious and majestic, but unusually attractive. My imagination refused to represent her with a face disfigured by scars; on the contrary, having heard somewhere of a passionate lover who had remained true to the object of his love, in spite of her disfiguring pock-marks, I endeavoured to think that I was in love with Sónichka, in order to have the merit of remaining true to

her, in spite of her scars. In truth, I was not in love when I approached the house of the Valákhins, but, all my former memories of love having been agitated, I was well prepared to fall in love, and I desired it, especially, since I felt ashamed of being the only one among all my friends, who was not in love.

The Valákhins lived in a small, neat frame house, with an entrance from the courtyard. Upon ringing the bell, which was at that time a great rarity in Moscow, the door was opened by a tiny, neatly dressed boy. He either did not know, or did not wish to tell me, whether the family was at home, and, leaving me in the dark antechamber, ran away into a still darker corridor.

I was left quite awhile alone in that dark room, from which, in addition to the entrance and the corridor, there was another closed door, and I partly marvelled at the gloomy character of the house, and partly supposed that it was the proper thing with people who had been abroad. About five minutes later, the door into the parlour was opened from within by the same boy, and he led me to a tidy, but not richly furnished, sitting-room, into which Sónichka entered right after me.

She was seventeen years old. She was very small of stature and very thin, and the colour of her face was sallow and unhealthy. No scars were to be noticed on her face, but the exquisite bulging eyes, and the bright, kindly, happy smile were the same that I had known and loved in my childhood. I had not expected her to be like this, and so was not able at once to pour out upon her all the feeling which I had prepared on my way up. She gave me her hand, frankly shook mine in the English fashion, which was then quite as rare a thing as the bell, and made me sit down near her upon the sofa.

"Oh, how glad I am to see you, dear Nicolas," she said, looking straight into my face with such a sincere expression on her countenance that I heard in the words

"dear Nicolas" a friendly, and not a condescending tone. To my astonishment, she was, after her journey abroad, even simpler, lovelier, and more familiar in her address than before. I noticed two small scars near the nose and upon an eyebrow, but her wonderful eyes and smile tallied with my recollections, and sparkled as of old.

"How you have changed!" she said. "You are a big man now! And I, how do you find me?"

"Ah, I should not have recognized you," I answered, though I was all the time thinking that I should have known her. I again felt myself in that careless, happy frame of mind in which, five years before, I had danced the "grandfather" with her at grandmother's ball.

"Well, have I grown much homelier?" she asked me, shaking her little head.

"No, not at all! You have grown a little taller, are older," I hastened to answer, "but, on the contrary — I even — "

"Oh, well, it makes no difference. And do you remember our dances and games, and St. Jérôme, and Madame Dorat?" (I did not remember any Madame Dorat; she was evidently carried away by the pleasure of childish reminiscences, and mixed them up.) "Oh, it was such a glorious time!" she continued, and the same smile, no, a smile even better than the one I had retained in my memory, and the same eyes sparkled before me. While she was speaking I had time to consider the situation in which I found myself, and I concluded that just then I was in love. The moment I had decided this, my happy and careless mood left me, a mist covered all that was before me, — even her eyes and smile; I was ashamed of something, I blushed, and lost my ability to speak.

"These are different times now," she continued, sighing and lightly raising her brows. "Everything is worse now, and we are worse, is it not so, Nicolas?"

I could not answer, and looked at her in silence.

"Where are now all those Ivins and Kornákovs of those days? Do you remember them?" she continued, with some curiosity gazing at my blushing and frightened face. "It was a glorious time!"

And still I could not answer.

I was for a time brought out of my state of oppression by the arrival of Madame Valákhin. I rose and bowed, and regained my ability to speak; on the other hand, a strange change took place in Sónichka with the appearance of her mother. All her merriment and familiarity suddenly disappeared, even her smile was different, and, except for her stature, she became the young lady from abroad, that I had imagined I should find. It seemed that the change had no cause, because her mother smiled just as pleasantly, and in all her movements expressed the same meekness as of old. Madame Valákhin seated herself in an armchair, and pointed out to me a place near her. She said something to her daughter in English, and Sónichka went out, which gave me still further relief.

Madame Valákhin asked me about my family, about my brother and father, then told me of her bereavement, — the loss of her husband, — and finally, feeling that there was nothing left to talk about, looked at me in silence, as much as to say: "If you will get up, and bow, and leave, you will be doing very well, my dear!" but a strange thing happened. Sónichka had returned to the room with some handiwork, and had seated herself in the other corner, so that I felt her glances upon me. While Madame Valákhin was telling me about the loss of her husband, I once more recalled that I was in love, and I thought that the mother must have guessed it, and was again overcome by a fit of bashfulness, which was so strong that I felt myself unable to move a limb in a natural manner. I knew that in order to rise and leave, I should have to think of

how to place my leg, what to do with my head, and what with my hand, — in short, I felt almost the same sensation as the evening before, when I had drunk half a bottle of champagne. I felt that I should not be able to manage it all, and consequently should not be able to rise, and I really could not rise. Madame Valákhin must have wondered when she saw my face as red as a lobster, and my complete immobility, but I decided that it was safer to stay in that stupid pose than to risk getting up and going in an awkward manner.

And thus I sat for quite awhile, hoping that some unforeseen accident would help me out of this predicament. This accident presented itself in the shape of an insignificant young man, who entered the room with the manner of a familiar acquaintance, and politely bowed to me. Madame Valákhin rose, excusing herself on the ground that she had to speak to her business manager, and looked at me with a perplexed expression, which said, "If you wish to stay here all the time, I shall not drive you away." Exerting a terrible effort over myself, I rose, but was not able to bow, and, starting to leave, accompanied by looks of sympathy from mother and daughter, caught my foot in a chair which was not at all in my way. I did so because all my attention was directed to not catching my foot in the carpet over which I was walking. In the open air, where I tossed about and moaned so loud that Kuzmá several times asked me what I wished, this feeling disappeared, and I began calmly to reflect over my love for Sónichka, and over her relations to her mother, which seemed strange to me. When I later told father that Madame Valákhin and her daughter were not on good terms, he said:

"Yes, she torments the poor girl with her dreadful stinginess, and that is strange," he added, with a feeling which was stronger than what he could have for a mere relative, "for she used to be such a dear, charming woman.

I cannot understand what made her change so. Did you not see in her house some kind of a secretary? What business has a Russian lady to keep a secretary?" he said, angrily walking away from me.

"Yes, I did," I answered.

"Is he, at least, good-looking?"

"No, not at all."

"Incomprehensible," said papa, angrily jerking his shoulder, and coughing.

"So I am in love," I thought, riding in my vehicle.

XIX.

THE KORNÁKOVS

THE second visit in my round of calls was at the house of the Kornákovs. They were living in the second floor of a large house in the Arbát. The staircase was exceedingly fine and neat, but not magnificent. A canvas stair-carpet was held in place by shining brass rods, but there were no flowers, and no mirrors. The parlour, through which I passed over a brilliantly polished floor into the sitting-room, was furnished just as severely, coldly, and neatly; everything shone and was solid, if not entirely new; but neither pictures, nor curtains, nor any other ornaments were to be seen. There were several princesses in the sitting-room. They all sat so correctly and so stolidly that it was quite apparent they sat differently when there were no guests.

"Mamma will be here soon," said the oldest of them, seating herself near me. This princess entertained me for fifteen minutes, speaking so freely and cleverly that the conversation did not lag for a second; but it was too obvious she was entertaining, and so I did not like her. She told me, among other things, that her brother Stepán, whom they called Etienne, and who had entered the School of Cadets two years ago, had been promoted to the rank of officer. When she spoke of her brother, especially of his having entered a regiment of hussars against his mother's will, she looked frightened, and all

the younger princesses, who sat in silence, also looked frightened; when she spoke of grandmother's death, she looked sad, and all the younger princesses looked likewise; when she recalled how I struck St. Jérôme, and was led out of the room, she laughed and showed her bad teeth, and all the princesses laughed and showed their bad teeth.

Their mother entered, — the same little, wizened woman with the same wandering eyes and the same habit of looking at others while speaking to you. She took my hand, and raised her own to my lips for me to kiss, which I should not have done otherwise, as I did not consider it necessary.

"How glad I am to see you!" she spoke with her usual volubility, glancing at her daughters. "Oh, how he resembles his mamma! Don't you think so, Lise?"

Lise said that it was so, although I am quite sure that there was not the faintest resemblance to my mother.

"So there you are, a big man! You know, my Etienne, he is your cousin twice removed — no, not twice removed, — how is it, Lise? My mother was Várvara Dmítrievna, the daughter of Dmítri Nikoláevich, and your grandmother was Natálya Nikoláevna."

"That makes it three times removed," said the eldest princess.

"Oh, you are getting everything mixed," her mother cried to her, angrily; "not at all thrice removed, but *issus de germains*, — that's what you are with Etienne. He is an officer now, do you know? Only it is not good for him to have his freedom so soon. You young people ought to be kept in strong hands, like this! You are not angry with your old aunt for telling you the truth? I kept Etienne with severity, and I find that it is the right way."

"Yes, that is how we are related," she continued. "Prince Iván Ivánovich is my uncle, and was your

mother's uncle. Consequently your mamma and I were first cousins — no, twice removed, yes, that's it. Well, tell me: have you, my friend, called on Prince Iván?"

I said I had not, but that I should that very day.

"Oh, how can you?" she cried. "You ought to have made your first visit to him. You know that Prince Iván is just like a father to you. He has no children, consequently you and my children are his only heirs. You must honour him according to his years and position in the world, and everything. I know, you young people in these years no longer count your family ties, and do not like old men; but you hear what your old aunt is telling you, because she loves you, and she loved your mamma, and also loved and respected your grandmother very much. Do go there by all means, by all means go there!"

I told her I would by all means, and as the visit had, in my opinion, lasted long enough, I rose and wanted to leave, but she held me back.

"No, wait a minute. Where is your father, Lise? Call him in. He will be so happy to see you," she continued, turning to me. About two minutes later Prince Mikháylo entered. He was a thickset gentleman, very untidily dressed, badly shaven, and with such an indifferent expression on his face that it looked stupid. He was not at all glad to see me, at least he did not say so; but the princess, whom he evidently feared very much, said to him:

"Am I not right? Vóldemar" (she had obviously forgotten my name) "resembles his mamma!" and she winked in such a way that the prince, guessing what she was after, walked up to me, and, with an impassive and even dissatisfied expression on his face, offered me his unshaven cheek for a kiss.

"You are not yet dressed, and you have to drive out," said the princess immediately after, in a tone which, no doubt, was her usual one in relation to the people of the

house. "You want to provoke them again, to make them angry."

"Directly, directly, my dear," said Prince Mikháylo, going out. I bowed and left.

I heard for the first time that we were heirs of Prince Iván Ivánovich, and that gave me an unpleasant sensation.

XX.

THE IVINS

THE impending obligatory visit weighed even more heavily on my mind. But before calling on the prince, my way lay past the Ivins. They were living in Tver Street, in an immense, beautiful house. I walked, not without fear, up the parade entrance, where a porter stood with a staff.

I asked him whether they were at home.

"Whom do you wish? The general's son is at home," said the porter to me.

"And the general himself?" I asked, courageously.

"I shall have to announce you. What shall I say?" said the porter and rang the bell. A lackey's feet in half-boots appeared on the staircase. I was so intimidated, without knowing why, that I told the lackey not to announce me to the general, that I should go first to see the general's son. As I walked up this large staircase, it seemed to me that I had become dreadfully small, not in the transferred, but in the real, sense of the word. I had experienced the same feeling as my vehicle drove up to the great entrance: it appeared to me that the vehicle, the horse, and the coachman had all become small. The general's son was lying on a divan, with an open book before him, and asleep, when I entered the room. His tutor, Frost, who was still staying in their house, walked in behind me with his smart gait, and woke up his charge. Ivin did not express any especial pleasure at seeing me,

and I noticed that he looked at my eyebrows while speaking to me. Although he was very civil, it seemed to me that he was entertaining me, like the princess, that he did not feel himself particularly attracted to me, and that he had no need of my acquaintance, since he certainly had a different, his own, circle of friends. All this I concluded from the fact that he gazed at my eyebrows. In short, his relations with me were, however much it hurt me to acknowledge it, very nearly the same as mine with Ilínka. I was becoming irritated, caught every glance of Ivin's on the wing, and when his eyes met those of Frost, I translated it by the question: "Why did he call on us anyway?"

Having conversed with me awhile, Ívin said that his parents were at home, and asked me whether I should not like to go down with him to see them.

"I shall be dressed at once," he added, as he left the room, though he was well dressed as it was, — in a new coat and white vest. A few minutes later he came out in his uniform, all buttoned up, and we walked down together. The gala rooms through which we passed were exceedingly large, high, and, I think, luxuriously appointed, for there was something of marble, of gold, of muslin-wrapped objects, of mirrors. Madame Ivin entered through another door into a small room behind the sitting-room, at the same time with us. She received me in a friendly and familiar manner, seated me near her, and sympathetically asked me about our whole family.

Madame Ivin, whom I had seen in passing two or three times before, and whom I now watched attentively, pleased me very much. She was tall, thin, very white, and seemed to be continually sad and emaciated. Her smile was sad, but exceedingly kind, her eyes large, tired, and slightly squinting, which gave her a still sadder and more attractive aspect. She sat, not bending over, but somehow flagging all her body, and all her movements were droop-

ing. She spoke indolently, but the sound of her voice and her enunciation, with the indistinct utterance of r and l, were agreeable. She did not entertain me. My answers relative to my family obviously afforded her a melancholy interest, as though, hearing me, she sadly recalled better times. Her son had gone out somewhere; she silently looked at me for about two minutes, and suddenly burst into tears. I was sitting in front of her and could not think what to say or do. She continued to weep, without looking at me. At first I was sorry for her, then I thought: "Had I not better console her, and how is it to be done?" and finally I was angry, because she had placed me in such an uncomfortable situation. "Is it possible I have so piteous an appearance?" I thought, "or is she doing it on purpose, to find out what I will do under the circumstances?"

"It would be improper for me to leave now, as though I were running away from her tears," I continued to think. I moved in my chair, at least to remind her of my presence.

"Oh, how foolish I am!" she said, looking at me, and trying to smile. "There are days when I weep without any cause."

She was looking for the handkerchief near her on the sofa, and suddenly burst into more intense weeping.

"O Lord, how ridiculous it is that I should cry all the time. I loved your mother so, we were so friendly — were — and — "

She found her handkerchief, covered her face with it and continued to weep. I was again in an awkward predicament, and it lasted quite awhile. I was both annoyed, and very sorry for her. Her tears seemed to be sincere, and I thought that she was not weeping so much for my mother, as because she was not happy now, but had been much happier in those days. I do not know how it would all have ended if young Ívin had not come

in and said that father Ívin wanted to see her. She rose, and was about to leave, when Ívin himself entered. He was a short, strongly built, gray-haired old gentleman, with thick black eyebrows, entirely gray, closely cropped hair, and a very austere and firm expression of the mouth.

I rose and bowed to him, but Ívin, who had three decorations on his green dress coat, not only did not answer my salutation, but hardly looked at me, so that I suddenly felt that I was not a man, but some worthless thing, — a chair or window or, if a man, then such as does not in any way differ from a chair or window.

"My dear, you have not written yet to the countess," he said to his wife in French, with a passionless, though firm expression.

"Good-bye, M. Irteneff," Madame Ívin said to me, suddenly nodding her head haughtily and, like her son, looking at my eyebrows. I bowed once more to her and to her husband, and again my salutation had an effect as if a window had been opened or closed. Student Ívin, however, took me to the door and told me on the way that he should attend the St. Petersburg University after that, because his father had received a place there, mentioning some very important office.

"Well, whatever papa may say," I muttered to myself, seating myself in the vehicle, "my foot shall never cross their threshold again. That blubberer cries, looking at me as though I were some ill-omened person, and Ívin is a swine that does not greet one. I'll give it to him!" I did not have the least idea how I was going to give it to him, though the remark seemed appropriate enough.

I had later to listen often to father's persuasive advice that I ought to cultivate that acquaintance, saying that I could not expect a man in his position to occupy himself with such a boy as I was; but I stood my ground for a long time.

XXI.

PRINCE IVÁN IVÁNOVICH

"Now, the last visit in Nikítskaya Street," I said to Kuzmá, and we drove to the house of Prince Iván Ivánovich.

After passing through several ordeals of visiting, I generally gained self-confidence, and so even now drove up to the prince's with a sufficiently calm spirit, when I suddenly recalled the words of Madame Kornákov that I was an heir; in addition, I noticed two carriages at the entrance, and my former shyness came over me.

It seemed to me that the old porter, who opened the door for me, and the lackey, who took off my overcoat, and the three ladies and two gentlemen, whom I found in the sitting-room, and especially Prince Iván Ivánovich himself, who sat on a sofa in citizen's clothes, — it seemed to me that all these were looking at me as an heir, and consequently with malevolence. The prince was very gracious to me, kissed me, that is, he applied for a second his soft, dry, and cold lips to my cheek, inquired about my occupations and plans, joked with me, asked me whether I still was writing verses such as I had written for grandmother's name-day, and invited me to dine with him that very day. But the more he was gracious, the more it appeared to me that he wanted to treat me kindly only to avoid showing how displeased he was with the idea that I was his heir. He had

a habit, caused by the false teeth of which his mouth was full, of raising his upper lip every time he said something, and drawing it into his nostrils, and as he was doing so now, I imagined he said to himself: "Boy, boy, I know without you that you are an heir," and so forth.

When we were small we used to call Prince Iván Ivánovich grandfather; but now, in my capacity of heir, my tongue refused to roll out "grandfather," and to say "Your Highness," as one of the gentlemen present said, seemed humiliating to me, so that I tried during my whole conversation not to address him directly. But more than anything I was put out by the old princess, who was also an heir of the prince, and who was living in his house. During the whole dinner, when I sat by the side of the princess, I surmised that she did not speak to me because she hated me for being just such an heir as she, and that the prince paid no attention to our side of the table, because we, the princess and I, were heirs and, consequently, equally detestable to him.

"Yes, you will not believe me how uncomfortable I was," I said that very evening to Dmítri, trying to brag of my feeling of disgust at the thought that I was an heir (I considered it a fine feeling), "how uncomfortable I was the two hours I passed with the prince. He is a fine fellow, and was very gracious to me," I said, trying, in reality, to impress my friend with the fact that I was not saying all that because I felt myself humbled by the prince, "but," I continued, "the thought that I might be looked upon like the princess who is living at his house and fawning before him, is a terrible thought. He is a beautiful old man, and exceedingly good and gentle to everybody, yet it was painful to see how he maltreated the princess. That abominable money spoils all relations!"

"Do you know, I think it would be best to speak frankly to the prince," I said, "and tell him that I respect him as a man, but that I do not think of his

inheritance, and ask him not to leave me anything, and that only under such conditions would I visit him."

Dmítri did not laugh when I told him this, but, on the contrary, fell to musing and, after a few moments' silence, said to me:

"Do you know, you are wrong. Either you have no business to surmise that they are thinking of you in the same way as of that princess of yours, or, if you do surmise it, you must go farther and surmise that you know what they might think of you, but that these thoughts are so far from you that you despise them and will do nothing on their basis. You must surmise that they are surmising that you are surmising it — but, in short," he added, feeling that he was getting snarled up in his consideration, "it will be best not to surmise it at all."

My friend was quite right. Much, much later I convinced myself from the experiences of my life that it was harmful to think, and still more harmful to express much that looks very noble but ought to be for ever concealed from all in the heart of every man, and that noble words rarely harmonize with noble deeds. I am convinced that when a good intention has been uttered, it is hard, and more often impossible, to carry out that good intention. But how is one to abstain from uttering the noble, self-satisfied impulses of youth? Only much later one thinks of them and regrets them as a flower which one impatiently plucked before it was unfolded and then saw withered and crushed upon the ground.

Though I had just told Dmítri, my friend, that money spoiled all relations, I discovered the next morning, before our departure into the country, that I had squandered all my money on all kinds of pictures and Turkish pipes, and so borrowed of him for the journey twenty roubles, which he had offered me, and which I did not pay back to him for a long time.

XXII.

A CONFIDENTIAL TALK WITH MY FRIEND

THIS talk of ours took place in the phaeton on the road to Kuntsóvo. Dmítri dissuaded me from calling upon his mother in the morning, but came for me after dinner, in order to take me for the whole evening, even overnight, to the summer residence, where his family was staying. Only after we left the city behind us, and the muddy and motley streets and unbearable deafening noise of the pavement gave way to the broad view of the fields and the soft rumbling of the wheels on the dusty road, and the fragrant vernal air and broad expanse surrounded me on all sides, — only then I recovered from the manifold new impressions and from the consciousness of freedom which had completely entangled me in the last two days. Dmítri was communicative and meek, did not rearrange his necktie with his head, nor wink and blink nervously. I was satisfied with those noble sentiments which I had expressed to him, and supposed that for these he condoned my shameful affair with Kolpikóv, and no longer despised me for it. We chatted in a friendly manner about many confidential affairs which one does not communicate under all circumstances. Dmítri told me about his family, whom I did not know yet, about his mother, aunt, and sister, and about the one whom Volódya and Dubkóv regarded as his passion and called "red-haired." He spoke of his mother with a certain cold and solemn praise, as if to anticipate any retort upon that subject; his aunt he mentioned with

enthusiasm, but not without some degree of condescension; of his sister he spoke very little and as if ashamed to say anything about her; but of the "red-haired" girl, whose real name was Lyubóv Sergyéevna, and who was an old maid that, standing in some family relation to the Nekhlyúdovs, was living at their house, he spoke with animation.

"Yes, she is a remarkable girl," he said, blushing shamefacedly, but looking more boldly into my eyes. "She is not a young girl, I might even say she is old, and not at all good-looking, but what stupidity and nonsense to love beauty! I can't understand it, it is so stupid," he said, as though he had just discovered this latest and extraordinary truth, "but such a soul, such a heart and principles — I am sure, you will not find a girl like her in our day."

I do not know where Dmítri had got his habit of saying that everything good was rare in our day. He was fond of repeating this expression, and it somehow fitted him well.

"Only I am afraid," he continued, calmly, after he had in his mind completely demolished all people who were so stupid as to love beauty, "I am afraid that you will not understand or appreciate her soon: she is modest, and even retiring, and does not like to show her beautiful and remarkable qualities. Now, mother, who, you will see, is a beautiful and clever woman, has known Lyubóv for some years, but is not able and does not want to understand her. Even yesterday — I will tell you why I was out of sorts when you asked me about it. Two days ago Lyubóv Sergyéevna wanted me to take her to Iván Yákovlevich, — you have, no doubt, heard of Iván Yákovlevich, who is supposed to be insane, but in reality is a remarkable man. Lyubóv Sergyéevna is extremely religious, I must tell you, and understands Iván Yákovlevich thoroughly. She frequently goes to see him, to converse with him and to give him money for the poor, which she has earned herself.

She is a wonderful woman, you will see. Well, so I drove with her to Iván Yákovlevich, and I am very grateful to her for having seen this remarkable man. Mother refuses to understand this, and sees nothing but superstition in it. Yesterday this was the cause of my first quarrel with my mother, and it was pretty serious," he concluded, convulsively jerking his neck, as though in recollection of the feeling which he had experienced during that quarrel.

"Well, how do you think about it? That is, when you consider what will come of it — or have you talked with her of what will be, and how your love and friendship will end?" I asked, wishing to abstract him from his unpleasant memory.

"You ask whether I am thinking of marrying her?" he asked me, blushing again, but turning boldly around and looking into my face.

"Well, really," I thought, calming myself, "that's all right, we are grown-up men, — two friends travelling in a phaeton and discussing our future lives. Any outsider would be pleased to hear and see us."

"Why not?" he continued, after my affirmative answer. "My aim, like that of every sensible man, is to be as happy and as good as possible; and if she will only consent when I am entirely independent, I shall be happier and better with her than with the greatest beauty in the world."

While conversing, we did not notice that we had approached Kuntsóvo, and that the sky was clouded, and it was getting ready to rain. The sun stood low on our right, over the old trees of the Kuntsóvo garden, and half of the brilliant red disk was shrouded by a gray, weakly transparent cloud; from the other half burst forth in sprays the parcelled fiery beams and with striking clearness illuminated the old trees of the garden, that stood immovable and cast their thick green tops against the brightly luminous spot of the azure sky. The splendour

and light of this part of the heavens was in sharp contrast to a heavy lilac cloud which hung in front of us over a young birch grove that was visible on the horizon.

A little more to the right could be seen, beyond bushes and trees, the variegated roofs of the cottages, some of which reflected the bright sunbeams, while others assumed the gloomy aspect of the other side of the heavens. At the left, and below us, lay the blue expanse of a motionless pond, surrounded by pale-green willows that were darkly reflected on its dull, seemingly convex surface. Beyond the pond, a blackish fallow field stretched along the incline of a hill, and the straight line of a bright green balk, which cut through it, went away into the distance and was lost in the leaden, threatening horizon. On both sides of the soft road, over which the phaeton swayed in even measure, stood out the green, succulent, tufty rye, which here and there was beginning to form its stalks. The air was perfectly calm, and redolent with freshness; the verdure of the trees and leaves and rye was motionless and pure and bright. It seemed as though every blade were living its separate, full and happy life. Near the road I noticed a black footpath, which meandered between the dark-green rye that had risen to one-fourth of its full stature, and this footpath for some reason vividly reminded me of the country, and, through the reminiscence of the country, by some strange association of ideas, brought before me with intense vividness Sónichka and the fact that I was in love with her.

In spite of all my friendship for Dmítri and the pleasure which his frankness caused me, I did not want to know anything more about his feelings and intentions in regard to Lyubóv Sergyéevna, but was very anxious to tell him about all my love for Sónichka, which seemed to me to be a love of a much higher sort. But I could not make up my mind to tell him straight out how good I thought it would be when, having married Sónichka,

I should be living in the country, how I should have little children who would crawl on the ground and would call me papa, and how happy I should be when he would come with his wife, Lyubóv Sergyéevna, to see me, in their travelling clothes. Instead of all that I said, pointing to the sun, "Dmítri, see how magnificent!"

Dmítri did not say anything to me, being obviously dissatisfied because to his confession, which had, no doubt, cost him an effort, I had answered by directing his attention to Nature, to which he was generally indifferent. Nature affected him quite differently from me: it affected him not so much by its beauty as by its intrinsic interest. He loved it more with his mind than with his feelings.

"I am very happy," I said to him soon after, without paying any attention to his preoccupation with his own thoughts and to his complete indifference to what I might be telling him. "I have told you, you will remember, of a young lady with whom I was in love when I was a child: I saw her to-day," I continued, enthusiastically, "and now I am in love with her in earnest —"

And I told him, in spite of the continued expression of indifference upon his face, about my love and about all my plans for future conjugal happiness. And a strange thing happened: the moment I told him in detail of the whole power of my feeling, I began to feel that this feeling was diminishing.

A light rain overtook us after we had entered the birch avenue which led to the summer residence, but we did not get wet. I knew that it was raining because a few drops fell upon my nose and hand, and because something was pattering on the young viscid leaves of the birches which suspended their motionless curly branches and received these pure transparent drops with evident enjoyment that expressed itself in the strong odour with which they filled the avenue. We jumped out of the vehicle, in order to run through the garden to the house. At the

very entrance to the house we ran against four ladies who were coming from the other direction with rapid steps, two of them carrying some handiwork, one of them with a book, and another with a lapdog. Dmítri introduced me on the spot to his mother, his sister, his aunt, and Lyubóv Sergyéevna. They stopped for a second, but the rain began to fall in earnest.

"Let us go to the gallery; there you will introduce him once more," said the one whom I had taken for Dmítri's mother, and we ascended the staircase together with the ladies.

XXIII.

THE NEKHLYÚDOVS

In the first moment I was impressed more particularly by Lyubóv Sergyéevna, who, with her lapdog in her hands, walked up the staircase behind the rest, in thick, hand-knit shoes, and who, stopping two or three times, carefully examined me, and every time after that kissed her dog. She was very ill-looking; red-haired, thin, short, and somewhat misshapen. What made her homely face still more homely was her odd hair-dressing, with a parting on one side (the kind of hair-dressing bald-headed women use). However much I tried to please my friend, I could not find one single beautiful feature in her. Her brown eyes, though they expressed kindliness, were too small and dim, and decidedly homely; even her hands, that characteristic feature, though not large and not badly shaped, were red and rough.

When I walked up to the terrace after them, all the ladies but Várenka, Dmítri's sister, who only looked attentively at me with her large dark gray eyes, said a few words to me, before taking up their work, while Várenka began to read aloud her book, which she held on her knees, marking the place with her finger.

Princess Márya Ivánovna was a tall, stately woman of about forty years. One might have given her more, if one were to judge by the locks of half-gray hair that frankly stood out from under her cap. But by her fresh, exceedingly tender face, with hardly a wrinkle, and

especially by the lively, merry sparkle of her eyes, she seemed to be much younger. Her eyes were brown and wide open, her lips were rather thin and somewhat severe, her nose fairly regular and slightly to the left, her hands were without rings, large, almost masculine, with beautiful elongated fingers. She wore a dark blue high-cut dress that fitted tightly over her stately, youthful waist, which was evidently her pride. She sat remarkably upright, and was sewing a dress. When I entered the gallery, she took my hand, drew me to her, as if desiring to examine me at close range, and said to me, as she looked at me with the same cold, open glance which Dmítri had, that she had known me for a long time from her son's description. She invited me to stay a whole day with her, in order that she might get better acquainted with me.

"Do anything you may think of, without any regard to us, just as we shall not be inconvenienced by you, — walk around, read, listen, or sleep, if that gives you most pleasure," she added.

Sófya Ivánovna was an old maid and a younger sister of the princess, but she looked older. She had that superabundant corpulence which one finds only in short, fat old maids who wear corsets. She looked as though all her vitality had sprouted upward with so much force that it threatened to choke her any minute. Her short fat hands could not unite below the down curve of the band of her waist, and she was not able even to see the tightly laced band itself.

Though Princess Márya Ivánovna was black-haired and dark-eyed, and Sófya Ivánovna blonde and with large, vivacious, and at the same time calm, blue eyes (a rare thing indeed), there was a great family resemblance between the sisters: there were the same expression, the same nose, the same lips; only Sófya Ivánovna's nose and lips were a little thicker and turned to the right when she smiled, while with the princess they turned to

the left. Sófya Ivánovna, to judge by her garments and hair-dressing, endeavoured to appear young, and would not have shown her gray locks, if she had had any. Her glance and her treatment of me at first appeared very haughty and flurried me, while with the princess, on the contrary, I felt completely at ease. It may be, her stoutness and a certain resemblance to the picture of Catherine the Great, by which I was struck, gave her in my eyes that haughty mien; but I was thoroughly frightened when she looked fixedly at me and said, "The friends of our friends are our friends." I calmed down and suddenly changed my opinion of her completely as soon as she grew silent; after saying these words, she opened her mouth and drew a deep sigh. No doubt her corpulence had induced in her the habit of drawing a deep sigh after every few words, by opening her mouth a little and slightly rolling her large blue eyes. In this habit was somehow expressed such a gentle kindliness that after that sigh I lost my fear of her, and began to like her. Her eyes were charming, her voice melodious and pleasant, and even those very circular lines of her body at that time of my youth did not seem devoid of beauty.

Lyubóv Sergyéevna, as the friend of my friend, would soon say, I thought, something very friendly and familiar to me, and she, indeed, looked at me for quite awhile in silence, as if undecided whether that which she was going to say to me would not be too familiar; but she interrupted the silence only to ask me in what Faculty I was. Then she again looked for a long time sharply at me, obviously wavering as to whether she had better speak that intimate word or not, and I, noticing that hesitation in her, begged her by the expression on my face to tell it to me, but she only said, "Nowadays, they say, they do not pay much attention to the sciences in the university," and called up her lap-dog Suzette.

Lyubóv Sergyéevna spoke all that evening mostly in

such phrases, which had nothing to do with the matter in hand, and did not fit each other; but I had such confidence in Dmítri, and he kept on looking all the evening with such anxiety, now at me, and now at her, with an expression which meant, "Well, what do you say?" that, as is often the case, I was very far from formulating my thought in regard to her, though at heart I was convinced that there was nothing remarkable in Lyubóv Sergyéevna.

Finally, the last person of that family, Várenka, was a plump girl sixteen years of age. Nothing but her dark gray eyes, which united merriment and quiet attention, and in expression very much resembled the eyes of her aunt, and a long blond braid, and an extremely tender and beautiful hand, was attractive in her.

"M. Nicolas, it must be tiresome to you to begin listening in the middle," said Sófya Ivánovna with her kindly sigh, turning the piece of the dress which she was sewing.

The reading just then stopped, because Dmítri had left the room.

"Or have you read 'Rob Roy' before?"

At that time I considered it my duty, because of my student uniform if for no other reason, to answer the simplest question of persons with whom I was little acquainted, in a clever and original manner, and regarded it as shameful to give short, clear answers, such as, "yes," "no," and so forth. Looking at my new fashionable pantaloons and the bright buttons of my coat, I answered that I had not read "Rob Roy," but that I liked very much to hear it read, because I preferred to read books from the middle rather than from the beginning.

"It is twice as interesting. You can guess what was before, and what will follow after," I added, smiling contentedly.

The princess laughed, as it seemed to me, unnaturally, but I learned later that she had no other laugh.

"It must be the truth," she said. "Well, shall you stay here long, Nicolas? You will not be offended at our not calling you Monsieur. When do you leave?"

"I do not know; maybe to-morrow, and maybe we shall stay quite awhile yet," I answered for some reason, although I was quite sure we should leave the next day.

"I wish you would stay, both for your sake and for Dmítri's," the princess remarked, looking somewhere into the distance. "At your years friendship is a glorious thing."

I felt that all were looking at me and waiting to hear what I should say, though Várenka pretended to be examining the work of her aunt; I felt that I was, so to speak, being examined, and that I had to show myself from my most advantageous side.

"Yes, for me," I said, "Dmítri's friendship is useful, but I cannot be useful to him: he is a thousand times better than I."

Dmítri was not there to hear me, or I should have been afraid of his feeling the insincerity of my words.

The princess again laughed her unnatural laugh, which was natural to her.

"Well, hearing him," she said, "*c'est vous qui êtes un petit monstre de perfection.*"

"*Monstre de perfection,* — that is excellent, I must remember it," I thought.

"However, not to mention you, he himself is a good example of that," she continued, lowering her voice (which was particularly pleasing to me) and pointing with her eyes to Lyubóv Sergyéevna. "He has discovered in poor aunty" (thus they called Lyubóv Sergyéevna), "whom I have known these twenty years with her Suzette, perfections which I had never suspected — Várya, tell them to bring me a glass of water," she added, again gazing into the distance, probably considering that it was yet too early, or that I ought not to be initiated at all in their

family relations, "or no, he had better go. He is doing nothing, but you continue to read. Go, my dear, right through the door and, having walked fifteen paces, stop and say in a loud voice, 'Peter, bring Márya Ivánovna a glass of ice-water!'" she said to me, and again laughed her unnatural laugh.

"She, no doubt, wants to say something about me," I thought, leaving the room. "No doubt, she wants to say that she has noticed that I am a very clever young man." I had not yet walked the fifteen paces when stout Sófya Ivánovna, all out of breath, but walking with rapid and light steps, caught up with me.

"*Merci, mon cher*," she said, "I am going there myself, so I shall order it."

XXIV.

LOVE

SÓFYA IVÁNOVNA, as I found out later, was one of those rare unmarried women who are born for family happiness, but to whom fate has denied that happiness, and who, on account of this denial, suddenly decide to pour out on a few chosen people all that treasure of love which has so long been stored up, and has grown and strengthened in their heart for husband and children. And that treasure is in old maids of this description so inexhaustible that, though there may be many chosen ones, there is still left much love, which they pour out on all their neighbours, good and bad people, with whom they happen to come in contact in their lives.

There are three kinds of love:

1. Fair love,
2. Self-sacrificing love, and
3. Active love.

I am not speaking of the love of a young man for a young woman, and *vice versa*, — I am afraid of these tendernesses. I have been so unhappy in my life that I never have seen in this kind of love one spark of truth, but only a lie in which sentimentality, conjugal relations, money, and the desire to tie or untie one's hands so entangled the sentiment itself that it was impossible to make out anything. I am speaking of the love for man, which, according to the greater or smaller power of the soul, is concentrated on one, on a few, or is poured

out on many, — of the love for a mother, father, brother, for children, for a companion, for a countryman, — of the love for man.

Fair love consists in love for the beauty of the sentiment and its expression. For people who love thus, the loved object is dear only to the extent to which it evokes that agreeable sensation, the consciousness and expression of which they enjoy. People who love with a fair love, care very little for reciprocation, as being a circumstance that has no effect upon the beauty and pleasurableness of their sentiment. They often change the objects of their love, since their main aim consists only in having the pleasurable sensation of love continually evoked. In order to sustain that pleasurable sensation, they speak in the choicest terms of their love, both to the object of that love, and to all who do not even have any interest in the matter. In our country people of a certain category, who love fairly, not only tell everybody of their love, but invariably tell it in French. It may seem strange and ridiculous, but I am convinced that there have been and still are many people of a certain society, particularly women, whose love for their friends, husbands, and children would be annihilated at once, if they were prohibited from speaking of it in French.

Love of the second kind — self-sacrificing love — consists in the love for the process of self-sacrifice in behalf of the beloved object, without any regard to whether the beloved object is to gain or lose anything from these sacrifices. "There is no unpleasantness which I should be unwilling to inflict upon myself, in order to prove my loyalty to the whole world and to *him*, or to *her*." That is the formula of the love of this kind. People who love in this manner never believe in reciprocation (for it is more meritorious to sacrifice myself for him who does not understand me), are always sickly, which also in-

creases the deserts of sacrifice; they are generally constant, for it would be hard for them to lose the deserts of the sacrifices which they have made for their beloved object; they are always ready to die, in order to prove to *him* or *her*, all their attachment, but despise the petty, commonplace proofs of love, which do not demand any special impulse of self-sacrifice. It is a matter of indifference to them whether you have eaten or slept restfully, whether you are happy or well, and they will do nothing to afford you these comforts, if these are in their power; but they are ever ready, if the opportunity offers itself, to face bullets, throw themselves into the water, or into the fire, and to go into consumption from love. Besides this, people who are inclined to a self-sacrificing love are always haughty in their love, exacting, jealous, suspicious, and, oddly enough, wish dangers to the objects of their love, in order to save them from misfortune and to console them, and even vices, in order to mend them.

You are living alone in the country with your wife, who loves you with self-devotion. You are well and calm, and you have some occupation which you enjoy, — your loving wife is so weak that she cannot busy herself with her house affairs, which are transferred into the hands of servants, nor with her children, who are in the hands of nurses, nor with any other business, which she likes, because she loves nothing but you. She is obviously ill, but, not wishing to grieve you, she does not tell you so; she obviously suffers ennui, but she is prepared to feel all her life ennui for your sake; she is obviously worrying her life away because you so assiduously busy yourself with your affairs (whatever they may be, the hunt, books, the estate, service), and she sees that these occupations will be your undoing, — still she is silent, and suffers. But you are ill, and your loving wife forgets her own illness and does not leave your bed, in spite of your entreaties not to worry needlessly; and you

feel every second her sympathetic glance upon you, which seems to say, "Well, I told you so, but I shall not leave you." In the morning you are feeling a little better, and you go into another room. The room is not heated; the soup, which alone you are allowed to eat, has not been ordered from the cook; the medicine has not been sent for; but your loving wife, emaciated from her nocturnal vigils, is looking with the same expression of sympathy at you, walking on tiptoe, and in a whisper giving her unusual and indistinct orders to the servants. You want to read, — your loving wife tells you, with a sigh, that she knows you will not obey her and will be angry with her, but she is used to it, — that you had better not read; you want to walk up and down the room, — you had better not do that either; you want to talk to your friend who has come to see you, — you had better not. In the night you have a fever again, you want to forget yourself, but your loving wife, thin and wan, now and then sighing, is sitting opposite you in an armchair, in the dim light of a night-lamp, and with her faintest motion and her faintest voice provokes in you a feeling of anger and impatience. You have a servant with whom you have been living for twenty years, to whom you have become accustomed, who serves you with pleasure and with efficiency, because he has had a good sleep during the day and receives good wages, but she does not let him serve you. She does everything herself with her feeble, unaccustomed fingers, which you cannot help following with repressed anger, when these white fingers try in vain to uncork a bottle, snuff a candle, spill medicine, or cautiously touch you. If you are an impatient and irascible man, and ask her to leave you, you will, with your unstrung, ailing ears, hear her behind the door, submissively sighing, and weeping, and whispering some nonsense to your valet. Finally, if you have not died, your loving wife, who has not slept for twenty

nights during your illness (which she keeps repeating to you), becomes ill, and feeble, and suffering, and is even less fit for any occupation, and, while you are in a normal state, expresses her love of self-devotion only by an humble ennui, which involuntarily is communicated to you and all your neighbours.

The third kind, the active love, consists in striving to satisfy all wants, all wishes, caprices, and even vices of a beloved object. People who love in this manner, love for a lifetime, because the more they love, the more they find out their beloved object, and the easier it is for them to love, that is, to satisfy all the wishes of the loved one. Their love is seldom expressed in words, and if it is expressed, it is done, not in a self-satisfied and beautiful, but in a timid and shamefaced manner, because they are always afraid that they do not love sufficiently. These people love even the vices of their beloved being, because these vices make it possible for them to satisfy new wishes. They seek reciprocation, gladly deceiving themselves, believe in it, and are happy when they obtain it; but they continue to love even in adverse circumstances, and not only wish their beloved object happiness, but continually strive by all means, moral and material, great and small, to afford it to them.

It was this active love for her nephew, her niece, her sister, Lyubóv Sergyéevna, and even me, because Dmítri loved me, which shone in the eyes, and in every movement of Sófya Ivánovna.

It was not until much later that I fully appreciated Sófya Ivánovna, but even then the question occurred to me: Why has Dmítri, who endeavoured to understand love in an entirely different way from other young men, and who always had before his eyes dear, loving Sófya Ivánovna, suddenly become passionately enamoured of incomprehensible Lyubóv Sergyéevna, and why does he merely admit good qualities in his aunt? Evidently the

proverb, "A man is not a prophet in his own country," is just. One of two things is true: either there is really more of bad than good in every man, or a man is more susceptible of bad than of good. Lyubóv Sergyéevna he had known but for a short time, and the love of his aunt he had experienced ever since his birth.

XXV.

I AM BECOMING ACQUAINTED

When I returned to the gallery, they were not speaking of me, as I had surmised; Várenka was not reading, but, having put aside her book, was warmly discussing something with Dmítri, who was walking to and fro, rearranging his necktie with his neck, and blinking. The subject of their discussion was ostensibly Iván Yákovlevich and superstition; but the discussion was too heated for the implied meaning to be anything else than one nearer to the whole family. The princess and Lyubóv Sergyéevna sat silent, listening to every word, apparently desiring to take part in the discussion, but restraining themselves and letting Várenka speak for the one, and Dmítri for the other. When I entered, Várenka looked at me with an expression of such indifference that it was evident she was much in earnest about the discussion, and did not care whether I heard what she was saying, or not. The same expression was on the face of the princess, who was apparently on Várenka's side. Dmítri began to discuss more heatedly in my presence, and Lyubóv Sergyéevna seemed to be frightened at my appearance and said, without turning to any one in particular: "Old people say rightly, '*si jeunesse savait, si vieillesse pouvait.*'"

But this proverb did not stop the dispute, and only made me think that the side of Lyubóv and of my friend was in the wrong. Although I felt awkward at being present at a small family discussion, it was pleasant to see

the real relations of this household, which were brought out by the discussion, and to feel that my presence did not keep them from expressing their views.

How often it happens that you see a family for years under one and the same false shroud of decency, and that the real relations of its members remain a mystery for you! I have even noticed that the more impenetrable, and, therefore, more beautiful, that shroud is, the coarser are the actual, hidden relations. But let sometime, quite unexpectedly, a seemingly insignificant question about some blonde or some visit, or the husband's horses, arise in this family circle, — and the quarrel becomes without any apparent cause ever more embittered, things grow too crowded under the shroud for settlement, and suddenly, to the terror of the persons quarrelling themselves, and to the amazement of those present, all the real coarse relations come to the surface, the shroud, which no longer conceals anything, flaunts between the contending parties and only reminds you of how long you have been deceived. Frequently it is not so painful to strike the head against a crossbeam as to touch lightly a sore place. There is just such a painful sore place in nearly every family. In the family of the Nekhlyúdovs it was Dmítri's odd love for Lyubóv Sergyéevna, which provoked in his sister and mother, if not a feeling of jealousy, at least an offended family feeling. For this reason the discussion about Iván Yákovlevich and superstition had such a serious meaning for all.

"You always try to see in that which everybody ridicules and everybody despises," spoke Várenka in her melodious voice, pronouncing every letter distinctly, "yes, you always try to find something unusually good in it."

"In the first place, only the most frivolous person can speak of despising such a remarkable man as Iván Yákovlevich," answered Dmítri, convulsively jerking his head in a direction away from his sister, "and, in the second

place, you, on the contrary, try on purpose not to see the good which is standing before your eyes."

Turning to us, Sófya Ivánovna looked several times now at her nephew, now at her niece, and now at me, and two or three times she opened her mouth and drew a deep sigh, as though saying something mentally.

"Várya, please hurry up and read," she said, handing her the book and gently patting her hand, "I am anxious to learn whether he found her." (As far as I remember there was nothing in the novel about anybody finding anybody.) "And you, Mítya, had better wrap up your cheek, my dear, for it is blowing here, and you will get a toothache again," she said to her nephew, in spite of the dissatisfied glance which he cast upon her, presumably for having broken the logical thread of his proofs. The reading was continued.

This small quarrel did not in the least affect the family peace and the sensible harmony of that feminine circle.

That circle, to which Princess Márya Ivánovna obviously gave direction and character, had for me the entirely new and attractive character of a certain logicalness and, at the same time, simplicity and refinement. This character was expressed for me in the beauty, cleanliness, and solidity of things, — the bell, the binding of the book, the chair, the table, — and in the erect, corseted attitude of the princess, and in the display of the locks of gray hair, and in the habit of calling me at the first meeting Nicolas and *he*, in their occupations, in the reading and sewing, and in the extraordinary whiteness of their feminine hands. (They all had a common family feature in their hands, consisting in the flesh colour of the outer side of their palms, which, by a sharp, straight line, was separated from the extraordinary whiteness of the back of the hand.) But, above all this, character was expressed in the way all three spoke excellent Russian and French, distinctly

enunciating every letter, and with pedantic exactness finishing every word and sentence; all this, and especially the fact that they treated me in their company simply and seriously, like a grown man, telling me their own opinions and listening to mine, — I was so little used to it that, in spite of my shining buttons and blue facings, I was all the time afraid that they would tell me, "Do you really think we are speaking to you in earnest? Go to your lessons," — all this had the effect of relieving me entirely of timidity. I rose from my chair, changed seats, and boldly spoke to everybody, except Várenka, with whom, it seemed to me, it was not proper, but somehow prohibited, to speak the first time.

During the reading, while I listened to her pleasant, ringing voice, and looked, now at her, and now upon the sand path of the flower-garden, on which round, darkling drops of rain were formed; and upon the linden-trees, on the leaves of which continued to patter rare drops of rain from the pale, bluishy translucent rim of the cloud which was just passing over us, and then again upon her; and upon the last blood-red rays of the setting sun, which illuminated the thick old birches wet with the rain, and again upon Várenka, — I reflected that she was not at all ill-looking, as I had thought in the beginning.

"What a pity I am already in love," I thought, "and that Várenka is not Sónichka! How good it would be suddenly to become a member of this family: I should have at once a mother, an aunt, and a wife." All the time I was thinking this, I kept looking at Várenka while she was reading, and I imagined I was magnetizing her, and that she would have to look at me. Várenka raised her head from the book, looked at me and, meeting my glance, turned away.

"I see the rain has not stopped," she said.

And, suddenly, I experienced a strange feeling: I recalled that precisely what was happening then was a

repetition of something that had happened with me before; that just such a rain had pattered then, and the sun went down behind the birches, and I looked at *her*, and she read, and I magnetized her, and she looked around, and I recalled that it had happened before.

"Is it possible it is *she?* Is it really beginning?" But I quickly decided that it was not *she*, and that it was not beginning yet. "In the first place, she is not good-looking," I thought, "and she is just a young lady, with whom I became acquainted in the commonest manner, but *she* will be uncommon, and *her* I shall meet in some uncommon place; and then, I like this family so much because I have not seen anything as yet," I reflected, "and there are, no doubt, always such, and I shall meet many of them in my life."

XXVI.

I SHOW MYSELF FROM MY MOST ADVANTAGEOUS SIDE

At tea the reading stopped, and the ladies engaged in a conversation about persons and affairs unknown to me. This they did, as I thought, in order to make me feel, in spite of the gracious reception, the difference which existed between them and me, on account of the disparity of years and social standing. When the conversation became general, so that I could take part in it, I redeemed my previous silence by trying to display my extraordinary mind and originality, which, as I thought, I owed it to my uniform to do. When the conversation turned to summer residences, I at once told them that Prince Iván Ivánovich had a summer residence near Moscow; that people had come from London and Paris to look at it; that it was surrounded by a fence which had cost three hundred and eighty thousand; and that Iván Ivánovich was a very near relative of mine; and that I had dined with him to-day, and he had invited me by all means to come and stay with him the whole summer in his country house, but that I had refused because I knew that residence well, having been there several times; and that all those fences and bridges did not interest me in the least, because I could not bear luxury, particularly in the country; and that I liked the country to be entirely country-like. Having told this terrible, complicated lie, I became confused, and blushed, so that every one must have noticed that I was lying. Várenka, who was just then

passing a cup of tea to me, and Sófya Ivánovna, who was looking at me all the time I spoke, turned their faces aside and conversed about something else with an expression which I later met frequently in good people, when a very young man began to tell obvious lies, and which meant: "We know that he is lying, and why is the poor fellow doing so?"

I said that Prince Iván Ivánovich had a summer residence, because I could not find a better excuse for mentioning my relationship with Prince Iván Ivánovich, and my having dined with him that day. But why did I tell about the fence that cost three hundred and eighty thousand, and say that I had frequently been there, when I had not been there once, nor ever could have been, for Prince Iván Ivánovich lived only in Moscow and in Naples, which was quite well known to the Nekhlyúdovs, — why did I tell all that? I am absolutely unable to account for it. Neither in my childhood, nor in my boyhood, nor later in my riper years, have I ever noticed in myself the vice of lying: on the contrary, I was more inclined to be unduly truthful and frank; but in that first period of my youth I was frequently attacked by the strange desire to tell the most desperate lies, without any apparent cause whatsoever. I say "desperate lies," because I lied in matters in which it was very easy to catch me. It seems to me that the chief cause of this strange tendency lay in the vain desire to show myself as a different man from what I was, united with the hope, unrealizable in life, of lying without being detected.

As the rain had passed, and the weather during the evening glow was calm and clear, the princess proposed after tea that we take a stroll through the lower garden and inspect her favourite spot. Following my rule always to be original, and thinking that such clever people as the princess and I ought to stand above banal civility, I answered that I could not bear strolling around without

any aim, and if I did go out for pleasure I preferred to go all alone. I did not stop to consider that what I said was mere rudeness; it appeared to me at that time, that as there was nothing more disgraceful than trite compliments, so there was nothing more agreeable and original than a certain impolite frankness. However satisfied I was with my answer, I nevertheless went out with all the company.

The favourite spot of the princess was quite a distance below, in the very depth of the garden, on a small bridge which was thrown over a narrow strip of swamp. The view was very limited, but melancholy and graceful. We are so accustomed to mistake art for nature, that frequently the phenomena of nature which we have never met in art appear unnatural to us, as though nature were factitious, and, *vice versa*, those phenomena which have been too frequently repeated in art appear hackneyed, while some views which are too much permeated by one idea and sentiment, such as we meet in reality, seem artificial. The view from the favourite spot of the princess was of that kind. It was formed by a small shrub-fringed pond, just behind which rose a steep hill, all overgrown with immense, old trees and bushes, which frequently intermingled their variegated verdure, and by an ancient birch at the foot of the hill, which, overhanging the pond and extending its thick roots in its moist bank, leaned with its top against a tall, stately aspen and stretched its curly branches above the smooth surface of the pond, which reflected all those pendent branches and the surrounding verdure.

"How charming!" said the princess, shaking her head and speaking to nobody in particular.

"Yes, charming, but it seems to me it awfully resembles painted scenery," said I, trying to prove that I held my own opinion in everything.

The princess continued to enjoy the view, as though she had not heard my remark, and turning to her sister and

to Lyubóv Sergyéevna, pointed out the part which she particularly liked, — a crooked overhanging branch and its reflection. Sófya Ivánovna said that it was beautiful, and that her sister passed several hours at a time there; but it was evident she said all that to please the princess. (I have noticed that persons who are gifted with the ability to love rarely are impressed by beauties of nature.) Lyubóv Sergyéevna was also enthusiastic; she asked, among other things, "What keeps up the birch-tree? Will it stand a long time yet?" and continually glanced at her Suzette, which wagged its shaggy tail, and with its crooked little legs ran up and down the bridge, with an anxious expression, as though it were out of doors for the first time in its life. Dmítri entered into a very logical discussion with his mother, trying to prove that no view could be beautiful whose horizon was limited. Várenka did not say anything. When I looked round at her she, standing in profile, was leaning against the balustrade of the bridge, and gazing into the distance. Something obviously attracted and interested her very much, for she was apparently lost in contemplation and thought neither of herself, nor of being observed. In the expression of her large eyes was so much concentrated attention and calm, clear thought, and in her attitude so much unconstraint and, in spite of her low stature, even majesty, that I seemed to be struck again by the recollection of her, and I again asked myself whether it was not beginning. And again I answered myself that I was in love with Sónichka, and that Várenka was merely a young lady, the sister of my friend. But she pleased me at that moment, and in consequence, I was seized by an undefinable desire to do or tell her some little unpleasantness.

"Do you know what, Dmítri?" I said to my friend, walking up closer to Várenka, so that she might hear what I was saying, "I find that even without the mosquitoes there would not be anything beautiful here, but now," I

added, slapping my forehead and really killing a mosquito, "it is no good at all."

"You do not seem to love Nature," said Várenka to me, without turning her head.

"I find that it is a barren, useless occupation," I answered, quite satisfied at having said an unpleasant thing to her, and an original one at that. Várenka barely raised her brows for a moment, with an expression of pity, and just as calmly continued to gaze ahead of her.

I was vexed at her, and yet, the gray, faded railing of the bridge against which she leaned, the reflection of the pendent branch of the overhanging birch in the dusky pond, striving to unite with the drooping branches above, the swampy odour, the feeling of a crushed mosquito on my forehead, and her attentive gaze and majestic attitude frequently afterward appeared suddenly in my imagination.

XXVII.

DMÍTRI

WHEN we returned home after the stroll, Várenka did not wish to sing, as she was wont to do of an evening, and I was so conceited as to attribute the cause of it to myself, imagining that it was due to what I had told her on the bridge. The Nekhlyúdovs did not eat supper, and dispersed early, and on that day, when, as Sófya Ivánovna had predicted, Dmítri's teeth really began to ache, we went up to his room earlier than usual. As I supposed that I had accomplished all that my blue collar and my buttons demanded, and that all were pleased with me, I was in a very agreeable and self-satisfied frame of mind; Dmítri, on the contrary, was taciturn and gloomy, on account of the quarrel and the toothache. He sat down at the table, took out his note-books, — a diary and a copy-book where he was in the habit of writing down every evening his future and past occupations, — and, continually frowning and touching his cheek with his hand, was busy writing for a long time.

"Oh, leave me alone!" he cried at the chambermaid who was sent by Sófya Ivánovna to ask him how his toothache was, and whether he did not want a hot compress. After telling me that my bed would soon be made up, and that he would be back shortly, he went to Lyubóv Sergyéevna.

"What a pity Várenka is not pretty and, in general,

not Sónichka," I meditated, when I was left alone in the room. "How nice it would be after leaving the university to come here and propose to her. I would say: 'Princess, I am not young any more; I cannot love passionately, but I will love you for ever, like a dear sister.' 'I already respect you,' I would say to her mother, 'and you, Sófya Ivánovna, believe me, I esteem highly.' 'So tell me straight out: will you be my wife?' 'Yes.' And she will give me her hand, and I shall press it, and shall say: 'My love is not in words, but deeds.' How would it be," it occurred to me, "if Dmítri suddenly fell in love with Lyúbochka, — for Lyúbochka is already in love with him, — and wanted to marry her? Then one of us would not be allowed to marry. That would be well. Here is what I would do. I would notice it at once, and so I would come to Dmítri, without saying anything to anybody else, and would say to him: 'My friend, it would be in vain for us to conceal it from each other. You know that my love for your sister will end only with my life; but I know all; you have deprived me of my best hope; you have made me unhappy. Do you know how Nikoláy Irténev requites the unhappiness of all his life? Here is my sister,' and I would give him the hand of Lyúbochka. He would say: 'No, not for anything in the world!' and I would say: 'Prince Nekhlyúdov, you are trying in vain to be more magnanimous than Nikoláy Irténev! There is not in the whole world a more magnanimous man than he.' And I would bow, and leave. Dmítri and Lyúbochka would run out after me, in tears, and implore me to accept their sacrifice. And I might consent, and even be very happy, if only I were in love with Várenka —" These dreams were so pleasant that I was dying to communicate them to my friend, but, in spite of our vow of mutual frankness, I felt, for some reason or other, that there was no physical possibility of telling it.

Dmítri returned from Lyubóv Sergyéevna with some drops on his teeth, which she had given him. He was suffering more than before and, consequently, was more gloomy still. My bed had not yet been made, and a boy, Dmítri's servant, came to ask him where I was to sleep.

"Go to the devil!" called out Dmítri, stamping his foot. "Váska! Váska! Váska!" he cried, the moment the boy had left, raising his voice more and more. "Váska, make my bed on the floor!"

"No, I had better lie on the floor," I said.

"Well, all right, make the bed anywhere," Dmítri continued in the same angry voice. "Váska, why are you not making the bed?"

But Váska evidently did not understand what he was asked to do, and stood motionless.

"Well, what is the matter with you? Make the bed! Make the bed! Váska! Váska!" Dmítri cried, suddenly bursting into a fury.

But Váska did not understand him, being all perplexed, and did not budge.

"Have you sworn to kill — to drive me mad?" And Dmítri jumped from his chair, ran up to the boy, and with all his might struck his fist against the head of Váska, who ran headlong out of the room. Stopping at the door, Dmítri turned round to me, and the expression of madness and cruelty which had been on his face but a second ago, gave way to such a meek, shamefaced, and loving, childish expression that I was sorry for him, and, however much I wanted to turn away from him, I was unable to do so. He did not say anything to me, but silently paced the room for a long time, now and then casting a glance at me, with the same expression of entreaty, then took out his note-book, wrote something in it, took off his coat, carefully put it away, walked into the corner where the image was hanging, crossed his large white hands over

his breast, and began to pray. He prayed so long that Váska had time to bring the mattress and make a bed on the floor, as I directed him in a whisper. I undressed myself and lay down on the bed on the floor, but Dmítri was still praying. As I looked at Dmítri's slightly stooping shoulders and at the soles of his shoes, which stood out before me in all humility, every time he was making low obeisances, I loved Dmítri even more than before, and I considered whether or not I had better tell him what I had been dreaming about our sisters. When Dmítri finished his prayer, he lay down on the bed and, leaning on his arm, for a long time looked silently at me, with a kind and shamefaced expression. It was a hard thing for him to do so, but he seemingly was punishing himself. I smiled, looking at him. He smiled, too.

"Why do you not tell me," he said, "that I have acted contemptibly? That is what you have been thinking about."

"Yes," I answered (although I had been thinking of something else, it seemed to me that I had really been thinking of it), "yes, it was very bad. I had never expected such a thing from thee," I said, experiencing that moment a special pleasure in speaking "thou" to him. "Well, how are thy teeth?" I added.

"That is all over. Ah, Nikólenka, my friend!" said Dmítri, so gently that I thought there were tears in his eyes, "I know and feel how bad I am, and God sees how I wish and ask Him to make me better; but what am I to do if I have such an unfortunate, despicable character? What am I to do? I try to restrain and to reform myself, but that cannot be done at once, nor alone. It is necessary that some one should support and aid me. Now, Lyubóv Sergyéevna understands me and has helped me much. I know, by my diary, that I have greatly improved in the course of the year. Ah, Nikólenka, my darling!" he continued, after this confession, with unusual

tenderness, and in a calmer voice, "how much the influence of a woman like her means! O Lord, how good it will be when I am independent, with such a companion as she! I am a different man, in her presence."

Thereupon Dmítri began to evolve all his plans of marriage, country life, and uninterrupted labour over himself.

"I shall be living in the country, you will come to see me, and, maybe, you will be married to Sónichka," he said. "Our children will play together. All this seems ridiculous and foolish, and yet it may happen."

"Why not? It is very likely," I said, smiling and thinking all the while that it would be better still if I married his sister.

"Do you know what I will tell you?" he said to me, after a short silence. "You only imagine that you are in love with Sónichka, but, as I see, that is all nonsense, and you do not know yet what the real feeling is like."

I did not retort, because I almost agreed with him. We were silent for a moment.

"You have noticed that I was out of sorts to-day and had a bad quarrel with Várya. I felt ashamed later on, particularly because it happened in your presence. Although she does not think the right way about many matters, she is an excellent girl, and very good, as you will find her to be upon closer acquaintance."

His transition in the conversation from the subject of my not being in love to the praise of his sister gave me great joy and caused me to blush; still, I did not say anything to him about his sister, and we went on to speak of something else.

Thus we chatted to the second cockcrow, and the pale dawn peeped through the window when Dmítri went over to his bed and extinguished the candle.

"Well, now to sleep," he said.

"Yes," I answered, "only one word more."

"Well?"

"Is it nice to live in the world?" said I.

"It is nice to live in the world," he answered, in such a voice that it seemed I could see in the darkness the expression of his mirthful, gentle eyes and childlike smile.

XXVIII.

IN THE COUNTRY

THE next day Volódya and I left for the country on post-horses. On the road I passed in review all the different Moscow reminiscences, and also thought of Sónichka Valákhin, but not before evening, when we had five stations behind us. "Now, this is strange," I thought; "I am in love, and have entirely forgotten it. I must think of her." And I began to think of her, as one thinks while travelling, not connectedly, but vividly; and the upshot of my deliberations was that when I arrived in the country, I considered it necessary for two days to appear melancholy and pensive before the home people, and in particular before Kátenka, whom I regarded as a great connoisseur in matters of this kind, and to whom I hinted a bit about the condition my heart was in. Yet in spite of all my attempts at feigning before myself and others, in spite of all the intentional adoption of all the signs which I had observed in others who were in love, I recalled only for two days, and that not continuously, but more especially in the evenings, that I was in love, and finally, as soon as I entered into the new rut of country life and occupations, I completely forgot my love for Sónichka.

We arrived at Petróvskoe in the night, and I was so fast asleep that I saw neither the house, nor the birch avenue, nor any of the family, who had all gone to their rooms, and were long asleep. Stooping old Fóka, bare-

foot, in some kind of a woman's wadded jacket, with a candle in his hand, unlatched the door for us. When he saw us, he shook with joy, kissed us repeatedly on the shoulder, hastily removed his felt bed, and began to dress himself. I passed the front hall and the staircase while still half asleep, but in the antechamber the door-lock, the latch, the warped floor, the clothes-chest, the old candlestick stained as ever by tallow drops, the shadows from the crooked, cold, just lighted wick of the tallow dip, the ever dusty, unremoved double windows, beyond which, I remembered, grew a rowan-tree, — all these were so familiar, so full of memories, so in agreement with each other, as if united by one thought, — that I suddenly felt the caresses of the dear old house upon me. The question involuntarily presented itself to me: How could the house and I so long have been without each other? and, hastening somewhere, I ran to see whether all the rooms were still the same. Everything was the same, only everything was smaller and lower, and I had grown taller, heavier, and coarser, but such as I was, the house joyfully received me in its embrace, and with every deal, every window, every step of the staircase, every sound, awakened in me a host of images, feelings, and incidents of an irretrievable, happy past. We came to the sleeping-room of our childhood: all the childish terrors again nestled in the dusk of the corners and doors; we passed the drawing-room — the same quiet, tender love of our mother was shed over all the objects which stood there; we passed the parlour — the noisy, careless, childish mirth, it seemed, had stopped in this room, and was only waiting to be revived. In the sofa-room, whither Fóka took us, and where he made beds for us, everything, — the mirror, the screen, the old wooden image, every unevenness of the wall with its white wall-paper, — everything told of suffering and of death, and of that which will never be again.

We lay down, and Fóka left us, wishing us a good night.

"Is it in this room mamma died?" said Volódya.

I did not answer him, but pretended to be asleep. If I had said anything I should have burst into tears. When I awoke the next morning, I found papa, undressed, in slippers and dressing-gown, with a cigar in his mouth, sitting on Volódya's bed, and speaking and laughing with him. He jumped up from the bed with a merry shrug of his shoulders, walked up to me and, slapping my back with his large hand, placed his cheek before me and pressed it to my lips.

"Well, that is good, glad of it, diplomat," he said with his particular, mirthful kindness, gazing at me with his small shining eyes. "Volódya says that you have passed a good examination, like a fine fellow, — that is good. Whenever you make up your mind not to fool away your time, you are a nice chap, too. I am glad, my dear. Now we shall have a good time here, and in the winter we shall, perhaps, settle in St. Petersburg. What a pity the hunting season is past, or I should have given you the pleasure of that sport; well, can you hunt with a gun, Vóldemar? There is a lot of game, and I may go out with you some day. In the winter, God willing, we shall settle in St. Petersburg, and you will meet people and form ties, — you are now my big lads. I just told Vóldemar, you are now on the road, my work is done, you may go yourselves, and if you wish to take my advice, I shall give it to you. I am no longer your nurse, but your friend; at least, I want to be your friend and companion and adviser, wherever I can, and nothing else. How is that according to your philosophy, Kokó, eh? Good or bad? Eh?"

I, naturally, told him that it was good, and really found it so. Papa had that day an especially attractive, mirthful, and happy expression; these new relations with

me, as with an equal, a companion, made me love him even more.

"Well, tell me, did you call on all your relatives? At the Ívins? Did you see the old man? What did he say to you?" he continued to ask. "Were you at the home of Prince Iván Ivánovich?"

We conversed so long without getting dressed that the sun was beginning to pass away from the windows of the sofa-room, and Yákov (who was just as old, and just in the same way twirled his fingers behind his back) came into our room and announced to papa that the carriage was ready.

"Whither are you going?" I asked papa.

"Oh, I forgot," said papa, with a jerk of annoyance, and coughing. "I have promised to call on the Epifánovs to-day. You remember Miss Epifánov, *la belle Flamande?* She used to visit your mamma. They are excellent people." Papa left the room, jerking his shoulder, as I thought, bashfully.

Lyúbochka had come up several times to the door, during our chat, and asked, "May I come in?" but papa every time called out to her through the door, "By no means, for we are not yet dressed."

"What of it? I have seen you often in your dressing-gown."

"You cannot see your brothers without their 'inexpressibles,'" he cried to her. "Now, they will both knock at the door for you, — will that do you? Knock. It is even indecent for them to speak to you, while they are in such negligée."

"Oh, how intolerable you are! At least come as soon as possible to the drawing-room, for Mimi wants to see you," Lyúbochka cried through the door.

As soon as papa left us, I hurriedly dressed myself in the student coat, and went to the drawing-room. Volódya, on the contrary, was in no haste, and stayed awhile up-

stairs, talking to Yákov about the places where snipes and woodcocks were abundant. As I have said before, he was afraid of nothing as much as of what he called "tendernesses," with brother, papa, or sister, and, avoiding every expression of sentiment, fell into the other extreme, — coldness, which frequently gave painful offence to people who did not understand its causes. In the antechamber I stumbled on papa, who with short, rapid steps was hastening to take his seat in the carriage. He was dressed in his new, fashionable Moscow coat, and was scented with perfume. When he saw me, he merrily nodded to me, as if to say, "You see, it is fine!" and again I was struck by the happy expression on his face, which I had noticed in the morning.

The drawing-room was the same bright, high room, with the yellow English grand piano and large open windows, through which looked merrily the green trees and the reddish brown paths of the garden. After kissing Mimi and Lyúbochka, I walked up to Kátenka, but it suddenly occurred to me that it was no longer proper to kiss her, and I stopped, in silence, and blushing. Kátenka was not in the least confused, gave me her white little hand, and congratulated me on having entered the university. When Volódya came to the drawing-room, the same thing happened to him, at his meeting with Kátenka. Indeed, it was hard to decide, after we had grown up together, and seen each other every day, how we were to meet now, after our first separation. Kátenka blushed more than we. Volódya was not in the least abashed, but bowed to her lightly, and went over to Lyúbochka, with whom he spoke but little, and not at all seriously, and then they went out for a stroll.

XXIX.

OUR RELATIONS WITH THE GIRLS

VOLÓDYA held very strange views about the girls. He could be interested by such questions as whether they had had enough to eat, whether they had slept well, whether they were decently dressed, whether they did not make mistakes in speaking French, for which he would have to be ashamed before strangers, — but he did not admit the thought that they could think or feel anything human, and still less did he admit the possibility of discussing anything with them. Whenever they had occasion to turn to him with some serious question (which, however, they tried to avoid), when they asked his opinion about some novel, or about his occupations at the university, he made faces at them and walked away in silence, or answered them in a contorted French sentence, "*Comme c'i tri joli*," and so forth, or, looking serious and purposely stupid, he told them a word that had no meaning whatsoever, and no reference to the question, and suddenly pronounced, with dull eyes, such words as "roll" or "gone," or "cabbage," or something of the kind. If I repeated to him what Lyúbochka and Kátenka had said to me, he invariably answered:

"H'm, so you still discuss with them? No, you, I see, are no good yet."

One would have to hear and see him in order to appreciate the deep, invariable contempt which was expressed in that phrase. Volódya had now been a grown

man for two years, and fell continually in love with all the pretty women whom he met; but, although he every day met Kátenka, who had been wearing long dresses for two years, and was all the time getting prettier, the possibility of falling in love with her had never occurred to him. Whether it originated in the fact that the prosaic reminiscences of childhood, the ruler, the sheet, the caprices, were still too fresh in his memory, or in the disgust which very young people feel for everything domestic, or in the universal human weakness, when meeting upon the first path something good and beautiful, to pass by it, saying to oneself: "Oh, I shall meet many more of this kind in my life," — Volódya continued to look upon Kátenka as not a woman.

Volódya suffered much ennùi during that summer. This ennui was caused by the contempt in which he held us, and which he did not attempt to conceal. The constant expression of his face said, "Pshaw, what ennui, and nobody to talk to!" He would go out in the morning with his gun to hunt, or he would stay undressed until dinner in his room, reading a book. If papa was not at home, he even came to dinner with his book, continuing to read it, and not exchanging a word with any of us, which made us all feel guilty before him. In the evening he lay down with his feet on a sofa in the drawing-room, slept leaning on his arm, or with a most serious countenance told some most terrible, often quite improper, nonsense, which made Mimi furious and brought out red spots on her face, but caused us to die with laughter; but he never condescended to speak seriously with any one of our family, except with papa and occasionally with me. I quite involuntarily imitated my brother's view in regard to the girls, although I was not at all so afraid of tendernesses as he, and my contempt for the girls was far from being as strong and deep. From sheer ennui I tried that summer several times to get on a closer footing with

Lyúbochka and Kátenka and to converse with them, but I found in them every time such an inability to think logically, and such ignorance of the simplest, commonest things, as what money was, what people studied at the university, what war was, and so on, and such an indifference to the explanations of these things, that my attempts only confirmed me in my unfavourable opinion of them.

I remember how one evening Lyúbochka repeated for the hundredth time some dreadfully tiresome passage on the piano, while Volódya lay dozing on the sofa in the drawing-room, and now and then, with a certain malicious irony, not speaking to anybody in particular, mumbled: "She does bang! — Musician! — Bitkhoven!" (he pronounced this word with especial irony), "let her go — once more — that's it," and so on. Kátenka and I remained at the tea-table, and, I do not remember how, Kátenka led up to her favourite subject — love. I was in a mood to philosophize, and began superciliously to define love as a desire to obtain in another what one did not possess in himself, and so forth. Kátenka answered me that, on the contrary, it was not love when a girl thought of marrying a rich man, and that possessions were, in her opinion, a very unimportant matter, and that genuine love was only that which could last through separation (I knew at once she referred to her love for Dubkóv). Volódya, who, no doubt, had heard our conversation, suddenly raised himself on his elbow and interrogatively called out, "Kátenka — the Russians?"

"His eternal nonsense!" said Kátenka.

"Into the pepperbox?" continued Volódya, accentuating every vowel. I could not help thinking that Volódya was quite right.

Independently of the common, more or less developed, faculties of the human mind, of sentiment, and artistic feeling, there exists a private faculty, more or less developed in various circles of society, and especially in families,

which I call "understanding." The essence of this faculty consists in a conventional feeling of measure, and in a conventional one-sided view of things. Two people of the same circle, or of the same family, who possess this faculty, permit the expression of sentiment to a certain point, after which they both see nothing but empty phrases; they see at exactly the same moment where praise ends and irony begins, where enthusiasm ends and hypocrisy begins, which to people with different understanding may appear quite otherwise. People with the same understanding are impressed by every object, more especially by its ridiculous, or beautiful, or nasty side. To facilitate this equal understanding among the members of the same circle or family, there establishes itself a conventional language, conventional expressions, and even words, which define those shades of meaning that do not exist for others. In our family, this understanding was highly developed between papa and us brothers. Dubkóv also fell in with our circle and "understood," but Dmítri, who otherwise was much more clever than he, was dull in this. With no one did I carry this faculty to such perfection as with Volódya, with whom I had been brought up under identical conditions. Papa was falling behind us, and much which was to us as clear as two times two is four, was incomprehensible to him. For example, between Volódya and me were established, God knows why, the following words with their corresponding meanings: "raisins" meant a vain desire to show that I have money; "pinecone" (whereat it was necessary to put the fingers together and distinctly to pronounce the consonants) signified something fresh, healthy, elegant, but not foppish; a noun used in the plural signified an unjust prejudice in favour of that object, and so forth. However, the meaning depended more on the expression of the face, and on the subject under discussion, so that no matter what new word one used to express a new shade, the

other immediately understood it by the mere reference. The girls did not have our understanding, and that was the chief cause of our moral disunion, and of the contempt which we felt for them.

It may be they had their own "understanding," but it so differed from ours, that where we saw only twaddle, they saw feeling, and our irony appeared as truth to them. At that time I did not understand that they were not to blame for it, and that this absence of understanding did not prevent their being good and clever girls, and I had contempt for them. Then, having made a hobby of frankness, and applying this idea to myself in the extreme, I accused the quiet and trustful nature of Lyúbochka of secretiveness and hypocrisy because she did not see any necessity for unearthing and displaying all her thoughts and feelings. For example, Lyúbochka's making the sign of the cross over papa in the evening, her weeping and that of Kátenka in the chapel, whenever they went to serve mass for mother, Kátenka's sighing and rolling her eyes, when she played on the piano, — all that appeared to me as the merest hypocrisy, and I asked myself: "When did they learn to feign like grown people, and why are they not ashamed?"

XXX.

MY OCCUPATIONS

In spite of it all, I became that summer much more friendly with our young ladies, through my newly manifested passion for music. In the spring a young neighbour introduced himself at our house. The moment he entered the drawing-room he began to gaze at the piano and imperceptibly to move his chair up to it, while speaking with Mimi and Kátenka. After having said something about the weather and the pleasures of country life, he skilfully led up the conversation to a piano tuner, to music, and to the piano, and finally announced to us that he played, and, indeed, soon played for us three waltzes, while Lyúbochka, Mimi, and Kátenka stood at the piano and looked at him. This young man never called at our house again, but I took a great liking to his playing, his attitude at the piano, his head-shake, and especially his manner of taking octaves with his left hand, by rapidly stretching his little finger and thumb to an octave span, then slowly bringing them together, and again swiftly stretching them. This graceful gesture, his careless attitude, his head-shake, and the attention which the ladies showed to his talent gave me the idea of playing the piano. In consequence of this idea and because I convinced myself that I had talent and a passion for music, I began studying it. In this respect I acted like millions of people, of the masculine, but particularly of the feminine sex, who study without a good teacher, with-

out a real calling, and without the least conception what this art can offer them, and how they are to go about it in order that it should offer them something. For me, music, or rather piano playing, was a means to charm the girls with my sentiments. With the aid of Kátenka, I learned the notes, and limbered up my fat fingers; however, I used more than two months to accomplish this, and was so studious that even at dinner I practised with my refractory ring-finger on my knee, and in my bed on my pillow. I soon began to play "pieces," and played them, of course, with feeling, *avec âme*, as Kátenka herself admitted, but not in time.

The choice of pieces was the usual one, waltzes, galops, romances, arranged arias, and so forth, all by those charming composers, of which every man with a little healthy taste will select a small pile from a mass of beautiful things in a music store, saying, "These things one ought never to play, because nothing more insipid and stupid has ever been put down on music paper," and which, no doubt, for this very reason, you may find on the piano of every Russian young lady. It is true we had also "Sonate Pathétique" and the Cis-mol sonatas of Beethoven, for ever maimed and torn by the young ladies, which Lyúbochka played in memory of mother, and a few other good things which her Moscow teacher had given her; but there were also compositions by that teacher, insipid marches and galops, which Lyúbochka played also.

Kátenka and I did not like serious things, and preferred to everything "Le Fou" and "The Nightingale," which Kátenka played so that the fingers could not be seen, and I began to play quite loud and smoothly. I appropriated to myself the gesture of the young man, and frequently regretted that there were no strangers to see me play. Soon Liszt and Kalkbrenner proved to be above my strength, and I saw no chance of catching up with

Kátenka. For this reason, having concluded that classical music is easier, and also for the sake of originality, I suddenly decided that I liked the German classical music, became enthusiastic whenever Lyúbochka played "Sonate Pathétique," although, to tell the truth, that sonata had long been palling upon me, and began myself to play Beethoven and to pronounce his name in the German fashion. Through all that tangle and hypocrisy I had, as I remember, something like talent, because music frequently affected me powerfully to tears, and the things that I liked I managed to pick out on the piano without notes, so that if somebody had taught me then to look upon music as an aim, as an independent enjoyment, and not as a means with which to charm girls by the rapidity and expressiveness of my playing, I might have in reality become a decent musician.

The reading of French novels, of which Volódya had brought many with him, was my other occupation during that summer. It was then that all kinds of "Monte Cristos" and "Secrets" began to appear, and I pored over the books of Sue, Dumas, and Paul de Kock. All the most unnatural persons and incidents were as true to me as reality, and I not only did not dare to suspect the author of lying, but the author himself did not exist for me; from the printed page rose before me the living, real people and incidents. If I nowhere had met people that resembled those of whom I read, I did not for a moment doubt that I should some day.

I experienced in myself all the passions described, and perceived a similarity between me and all the characters, both the heroes and the villains of every novel, just as a susceptible man finds in himself the symptoms of every possible disease, when he reads a medical work. I liked in these novels the cunning ideas, the fiery passions, the magic incidents, the perfect characters, — if good, absolutely good, if bad, absolutely bad, — just as in my first

youth I imagined people to be; I was also very much pleased because it was all in French, and because the noble words which the noble heroes spoke, I could learn by heart and quote on the occasion of some noble deed. How many different French phrases I thought out by the aid of these novels, to be used to Kolpikóv, if I ever met him, and to *her*, when I should at last see her and confess my love to her! I was preparing to tell them something from which they would be overcome the moment they heard me.

On the basis of the novels, I even formed new ideals of moral qualities which I strove to attain. I wished above everything in all my acts and affairs to be "noble" (I use the French word, because it has a different significance from the Russian, which the Germans have comprehended, by adopting the word "nobel" and not mixing it up with the conception of "ehrlich"), then to be passionate, and finally, to be as *comme il faut* as possible, for which, however, I had a leaning even before. I tried in my looks and habits to resemble the heroes who had any of these qualities. I remember, in one of the hundred books which I had read that summer, there was one exceedingly passionate hero with thick eyebrows, and I was so anxious to resemble him in appearance (I felt myself morally to be his equal) that when I looked at my eyebrows in the mirror, I decided to cut them a little that they might grow out thicker; but when I began to cut them, I accidently cut too much in one spot, and it was necessary to even them up; to my terror I noticed in the mirror that I had lost my eyebrows altogether, and, consequently, was very ill-looking. But hoping that my brows would soon grow out thick as in a passionate man, I consoled myself, and was only disconcerted as to what to say to my people when they should see me without eyebrows. I got some powder from Volódya, rubbed it into my eyebrows and burnt it. Although the powder

did not flash up, I sufficiently resembled one who is burnt, and no one discovered my cunning; and really, when I had entirely forgotten about the passionate man, my eyebrows grew much thicker.

XXXI.

COMME IL FAUT

In the course of this narrative I have frequently hinted at the conception which corresponds to this French title. and now I feel myself constrained to devote a whole chapter to the conception that was one of the most disastrous and false ideas with which I was inoculated by education and society.

The human race may be divided into a variety of classes, — into rich and poor, good and bad, soldiers and citizens, wise and foolish, and so on; but every man invariably has a favourite chief classification of his own, in which he unconsciously places every new person. My chief and favourite classification at the time of which I am writing was into people *comme il faut* and *comme il ne faut pas.* The second division was subdivided into people more particularly not *comme il faut,* and into the common people. I respected people *comme il faut,* and considered them worthy of being on an equality of relations with me; I pretended a contempt for the second, but in reality hated them, cherishing against them an offended feeling of personality; the third did not exist for me, — I disregarded them entirely. My *comme il faut* consisted, first and foremost, in the use of an excellent French, more especially in the pronunciation. A man who pronounced French badly immediately provoked a feeling of hatred in me. "Why do you attempt to speak as we do, if you do not know how?" I asked him men-

tally, with a venomous smile. The second condition for *comme il faut* consisted in long, manicured, and clean nails. The third was the ability to curtsey, dance, and converse. The fourth, and this was very important, was an indifference to everything, and a constant expression of a certain elegant, supercilious ennui. In addition to these, I had common signs, by which I decided to what category a man belonged, even without speaking with him. My chief sign, outside of the room, gloves, handwriting, and carriage, were the feet. The relation of a man's boots to his pantaloons at once decided in my eyes his standing. Boots without heels, with sharp tips, and narrow borders of the pantaloons without straps, — that was a common man; boots with narrow round tips, and with heels, and pantaloons with narrow borders and straps, tightly fitting the legs, or broad, with straps standing out like canopies over the tips, — that was a man *mauvais genre*, and so forth.

It is strange that this conception of *comme il faut* should have become such a part of me, for I myself did not possess the least fitness for it. And, maybe, it took such strong possession of me, for the very reason that it cost me such effort to acquire this *comme il faut*. It is terrible to think how much invaluable time of my seventeenth year I wasted on the acquisition of this quality. It seemed to me that all those whom I imitated, Volódya, Dubkóv, and the larger part of my acquaintances, learned it with ease. I looked at them with envy, and quietly worked at my French, at the art of bowing without looking at the person to whom I bowed, at the art of conversing and dancing, at evolving in myself an indifference to everything and ennui, at my nails, cutting my flesh to the quick with scissors, — and I still felt that there was much labour left before I should reach the goal. My room, my writing-desk, my carriage, — all that I was unable to arrange in such a way as to be *comme il faut*, although,

in spite of my disinclination for practical work, I laboured very hard over it. With others everything seemed to go right, without the least effort, as though it could not be otherwise.

I remember how once, after a prolonged and vain effort over my nails, I asked Dubkóv, whose nails were remarkably beautiful, how long they had been in that shape, and how he had managed it. Dubkóv answered me: "As far back as I can remember myself, I have done nothing to make them so, and I cannot understand how a decent fellow can have any other nails." This answer grieved me very much. I did not know at that time that one of the chief conditions of *comme il faut* was secrecy in regard to the labours by which this *comme il faut* is acquired.

Comme il faut was for me not only an important merit, a beautiful quality, a perfection, which I wished to obtain, but it was a necessary condition of life, without which there could be no happiness, no glory, nothing good in the world. I should not have respected a famous artist, a savant, a benefactor of the human race, if he were not *comme il faut*. A man *comme il faut* stood beyond comparison higher than they; he left it to them to paint, compose music, write books, and do good, he even praised them for it, — why not praise the good wherever it may be found? — but he could not place himself on the same level with them, for he was *comme il faut*, and they were not, — and that was enough. It seems to me that if I had had a brother, mother, or father who were not *comme il faut*, I should have said that it was a misfortune, and that there could be nothing in common between me and them.

But not the loss of the golden time, which was employed on the assiduous task of preserving all the difficult conditions of the *comme il faut*, that excluded every serious application, nor the hatred and contempt for nine-tenths of the human race, nor the absence of any interest

in all the beauty that existed outside that circle of *comme il faut*, was the greatest evil which this conception caused me. The greatest evil consisted in the conviction that *comme il faut* was an independent position in society, that a man did not have to try to be an official, or a carriage-maker, or a soldier, or a learned man, if he was *comme il faut;* that, having reached that position, he had already fulfilled his purpose, and even stood higher than most people.

At a certain period of his youth, every man, after many blunders and transports, generally faces the necessity of taking an active part in social life, chooses some department of labour, and devotes himself to it; but this seldom happens with the man who is *comme il faut.* I know many, very many old, proud, self-confident people, sharp in their judgments, who to the question which may be given in the next world, "Who are you? And what have you been doing there?" would not be able to answer otherwise than: "*Je fus un homme très comme il faut.*"

This fate awaited me.

XXXII.

YOUTH

In spite of the jumble of ideas which took place in my head, I was in those years young, innocent, and free, and, therefore, almost happy.

At times I rose early, and this happened quite often. I slept in the open on the terrace, and the bright, slanting rays of the morning sun woke me. I dressed myself in a hurry, took a towel under my arms, and a French novel, and went to take a bath in the river, in the shade of a birch forest, which was but half a verst from the house. There I lay down in the grass in the shade and read, now and then tearing my eyes away from the book, in order to glance at the surface of the river which was violet in the shade, and began to ripple in the morning breeze, at the field of yellowing rye on the opposite bank, at the bright red light of the morning rays, painting ever lower the white trunks of the birches which, hiding one behind the other, passed away from me into the distance of the thick forest, and I enjoyed the consciousness of just such a fresh, young power of life as Nature was breathing all around me. When there were early gray cloudlets in the sky, and I felt chilled after my bath, I frequently walked across fields and through woods, regardless of roads, and with enjoyment wet my feet through my boots in the fresh dew. At that time I had vivid dreams about the heroes of my latest novel, and I imagined myself now

a general, now a minister, now an extraordinary strong man, now a passionate person, and with a certain thrill continually looked about me, in the hope of suddenly meeting *her* in the clearing or behind a tree.

When, in these walks, I came across peasants working, I, in spite of the fact that the common people did not exist for me, experienced an unconscious strong trepidation, and tried not to be seen by them. When it grew warmer, and the ladies had not yet come out for tea, I walked into the orchard or garden to eat the fruits and vegetables which were ripe. This occupation afforded me one of my greatest pleasures. I would go to the apple orchard, and there lose myself in the midst of a high tangle of raspberry bushes. Above my head was the bright, hot sky, and around me the pale green, prickly verdure of the raspberry bushes, intermingled with rank weeds. The dark green nettles, with their thin flowering tops, towered upwards in serried ranks; the claw-shaped burdocks, with their unnaturally violet prickly flowers, grew rankly above the raspberry bushes and higher than my head, and here and there, together with the nettles, reached up to the spreading, pale green branches of the old apple-trees, where, far above, the round, green apples, shining like ivory balls, were ripening against the hot sun. Below, a young raspberry bush, almost dried up and without leaves, winding, tended toward the sun; the green, needle-shaped grass and the young sage, bursting through the last year's dew-drenched leaves, grew luxuriantly in the eternal shade, as if they did not know that the sun was playing brightly on the leaves of the apple-tree.

In this thicket it was always damp, and there was an odour of dense, permanent shade, of cobwebs, of rotting apples that lay black on the damp earth, of raspberries, and, at times, also of chermes which I accidentally swallowed with a raspberry and washed down by quickly eating another berry. In moving ahead I frightened some

sparrows that always live in such thickets, and heard their hasty twittering and the strokes of their tiny, swift wings against the branches, and the buzzing of a honey bee in one spot, and, somewhere on the path, the steps of the gardener, Akím the fool, and his eternal mumbling. I thought, "No, neither he, nor any one else in the world, will find me here," — and with both hands I picked right and left the juicy berries from the white conical pedicels, and with avidity swallowed one after another. My legs, even above my knees, were wet through and through; my head was filled with some terrible nonsense (I mentally repeated, a thousand times in succession: "A-a-and twe-e-enty a-a-and se-e-even"); my arms and legs were stung through my wet clothes by the nettles; my head was burnt by the direct rays of the sun that penetrated through the thicket; I had long satisfied my hunger, and still I remained in the thicket, looking around, listening, meditating, and mechanically picking and swallowing some choice berry.

At about eleven o'clock I generally went to the drawing-room, usually after tea, when the ladies were sitting at their work. Near the first window, shaded from the sun by its unbleached canvas blind, through the rents of which the glaring sun cast such shining fiery circles on everything it struck that it was painful to look at them, stood an embroidery-frame, over the white linen of which leisurely walked some flies. Mimi sat at the frame, continually shrugging her head in anger, and moving from place to place, to escape the sun which, suddenly bursting through, cast a fiery strip now here, now there, upon her hand or face. Through the other three windows fell bright, perfect parallelograms, encased in the shadow of the window-frames; on the unpainted floor of the room, Mílka, true to her old habit, lay on one of these parallelograms and, pricking her ears, watched the flies that walked over it. Kátenka was knitting or reading, while

seated on the sofa, and impatiently warded off the flies with her white hands, which appeared translucent in the sun, or, frowning, shook her head in order to drive out a fly that had lost itself in her thick golden hair. Lyúbochka paced the room, with her hands behind her back, waiting for us all to go to the garden, or played on the piano a piece, every note of which had long been familiar to me. I seated myself somewhere, listening to her music or to the reading, and waited for a chance to sit down at the piano myself.

After dinner I sometimes honoured the girls with my presence in their horseback rides (to walk I regarded as incompatible with my years and position in the world). Our outings — when I took them to unusual places and ravines — were very pleasant. At times accidents happened to us, when I showed myself a brave fellow, and the ladies praised my riding and my daring, and considered me their protector. In the evening we drank tea in the shady veranda, and, if there were no guests, I took a walk with papa to inspect the estate, and then lay down in my old place, the large armchair, and, listening to Kátenka's or Lyúbochka's music, read a book and at the same time mused as of old.

At times, when I was left alone in the drawing-room, while Lyúbochka was playing some ancient piece of music, I involuntarily put down my book, and gazed through the open door of the balcony, at the curly pendent branches of the tall birches, upon which the evening shadows were falling, and at the clear sky, on which, upon looking fixedly at it, there seemed to appear and disappear a dusty, yellowish spot; and I listened to the music in the parlour, the creak of the gate, the voices of the peasant women, and the returning herds in the village, — and I suddenly thought of Natálya Sávishna, and mamma, and Karl Ivánovich, and for a moment felt sad. But my soul was at that time so full of life and

hopes, that this reminiscence only touched me with its pinion, and flew off again.

After supper, and, at times, after an evening stroll with some one through the garden, — I was afraid to walk by myself through the dark avenues, — I went to sleep alone on the floor of the veranda, which afforded me great pleasure, in spite of the millions of mosquitoes that devoured me. When there was a full moon, I frequently passed the whole night sitting on my mattress, gazing at the light and shadows, listening to the silence and to the sounds, dreaming about all kinds of subjects, especially about the poetical, voluptuous happiness that then seemed to me to be the greatest happiness of life, and repining because until then it had been my fate only to imagine it. When all the people went to their rooms, and the lights of the drawing-room were transferred to the upper chambers, where the feminine voices and the noise of opening and closing windows could be heard, I used to repair to the veranda, and walk to and fro there, eagerly listening to all the sounds of the house falling asleep. As long as there was the least, causeless hope for even an imperfect happiness of the kind I was dreaming of, I was not able calmly to construe the imaginary happiness.

At every sound of bare feet, of coughing, sighing, slamming a window, rustle of dresses, I jumped up from my bed, stealthily listened and watched, and for no apparent cause became agitated. But now the lights went out in the upper windows; the sounds of steps and talking were exchanged for the sound of snoring; the watchman began to strike the board in the night fashion; the garden grew both brighter and more gloomy, when the streaks of red light disappeared from the windows; the last light passed from the buffet-room to the antechamber, throwing a bright streak over the dewy garden, and I saw through the window the stooping figure of Fóka, who, in his jacket, and with a candle in his hand, was going to his bed.

I often found a great, agitating pleasure in stealing over the damp grass in the black shadow of the house to the window of the antechamber, in order to listen breathlessly to the snoring of the boy, to the moans of Fóka, who did not suspect that anybody was listening to him, and to the sound of his feeble voice, as he was saying his prayers. At last his candle, too, was blown out; the window was slammed to; I was left all alone, and timidly looking about me, hoping to see a white woman somewhere in the flower-garden or near my bed, I ran at full speed up to the veranda. Then I lay down on my bed, facing the garden, and, protecting myself as much as possible against mosquitoes and bats, looked into the garden, listened to the sounds of the night, and dreamt of love and happiness.

Then, everything came to have a new meaning for me: the sight of the ancient birches, which, on one side glistened in the moonlit sky with their curly branches, and, on the other, gloomily shrouded the bushes and the road with their dark shadows; and the quiet, rich sheen of the pond, evenly growing, like sound; and the moonlit glitter of the dewdrops on the flowers in front of the veranda, casting their graceful shadows across the gray flower box: and the sound of the quail beyond the pond; and the voice of a man on the highway; and the quiet, scarcely audible creaking of two old birches grating against each other; and the buzzing of a mosquito above my ear, under the coverlet; and the fall of an apple, caught in the branches, upon the dry leaves; and the leaping of the frogs that now and then came up to the steps of the terrace, and mysteriously glistened in the moon with their greenish backs, — all that had a new, strange meaning for me, — a meaning of some extraordinary beauty and unfinished happiness. And then *she* appeared with her dark black braid, and swelling bosom, always sad and beautiful, with bared arms, with voluptuous embraces. She loved me, and I sacrified all my life for one minute of her

love. And the moon rose higher and higher, and stood brighter and brighter in the heavens, the rich sheen of the pond, evenly growing, like sound, became more and more distinct, the shadows became blacker and blacker, and the light ever more transparent; and as I looked at all that and listened, something told me that *she*, with her bared arms and passionate embraces, was very far from being all the happiness in the world, that the love for her was very far from being all the bliss; and the more I looked at the full moon up on high, the higher did true beauty and goodness appear to me, and purer and nearer to Him, the source of all that is beautiful and good, and tears of an unsatisfied, but stirring joy stood in my eyes.

And I was all alone, and it seemed to me that mysterious, majestic Nature, the attractive bright disk of the moon, which had for some reason stopped in one high, undefined place of the pale blue sky, and yet stood everywhere and, as it were, filled all the immeasurable space, and I, insignificant worm, defiled already by all petty, wretched human passions, but with all the immeasurable, mighty power of love, — it seemed to me in those minutes that Nature, and the moon, and I were one and the same.

XXXIII.

NEIGHBOURS

I WAS very much surprised when, on the day of our arrival, papa called our neighbours, the Epifánovs, excellent people, and still more so when I heard that he called upon them. The Epifánovs and we had for a long time been at law for a certain tract of land. When I was a child I used to hear papa getting angry on account of this litigation, scolding the Epifánovs, and calling in different people, in order to defend himself against them, as I thought. I heard Yákov calling them our enemies and "black people," and I remember mamma's asking, that even the name of these people should not be mentioned in her house and in her presence.

From these data I formed in my childhood such a firm and clear idea that the Epifánovs were our enemies, who were ready to cut the throats not only of papa, but also of his son, if he ever fell into their hands, and that they were in the literal sense "black people," that when I saw, the year mother died, Avdótya Vasílevna Epifánov, *la belle Flamande*, taking care of mother, I could not bring myself to believe that she belonged to a family of black people. Still, I retained a very low opinion of that family. Although we frequently saw each other during that summer, I continued to be strangely prejudiced against them. In reality, these were the Epifánovs: their family consisted of a mother, a fifty-year-old widow, who was a well preserved and happy old woman,

her beautiful daughter, Avdótya Vasílevna, and her stuttering son, Peter Vasílevich, an unmarried ex-lieutenant, a man of very serious character.

Anna Dmítrievna Epifánov had lived separated from her husband for the last twenty years of his life, staying now in St. Petersburg, where she had some relatives, but mostly in her village of Mytíshchi, which was about three versts from us. They used to tell such terrible things about her manner of life that Messalina was an innocent child in comparison with her. It was for this that mother had asked that her name should not be mentioned in her house; but, without being at all ironical, one could not believe even one-tenth of this most malicious of all gossips, the gossip of country neighbours.

When I became acquainted with Anna Dmítrievna, there was nothing resembling that which was still told of her, though there lived in her house an office clerk, Mítyusha, a serf, who during dinner stood, pomaded and spruce, in a coat made in the Circassian fashion, behind Anna Dmítrievna's chair, and she frequently invited her guests in French to admire his beautiful eyes and mouth. It seems that Anna Dmítrievna had entirely changed her mode of life when, ten years before, she had ordered her dutiful son Petrúsha to leave the service and come home. Anna Dmítrievna's estate was small, — in all about one hundred souls, — and during her gay life there were great expenses, so that ten years before, her mortgaged and remortgaged property was forfeited and to be sold at auction without fail. Under these extreme circumstances Anna Dmítrievna supposed that the receivership, the invoice of the property, the arrival of the officers, and similar annoyances were due not so much to the failure in paying the interest as to the fact that she was a woman; so she wrote to her son that he should come and save his mother in this predicament. Although everything in his service went so well that he soon

expected to earn his own bread, he threw up everything, asked for his discharge, and, like a dutiful son who regarded it as his first duty to comfort his own mother (as he very frankly wrote to her), came down to the estate.

Peter Vasílevich was, in spite of his homely face, gawkiness, and stuttering, a man of exceedingly firm character and unusually practical mind. By petty loans, investments, prayers, and promises he managed to keep the estate. Having become a landed proprietor, Peter Vasílevich donned his father's wadded coat, which had been kept in the storeroom, did away with the carriages and horses, taught the guests not to visit Mytíshchi, and fixed the ditches, increased the ploughed area, diminished the land of the peasants, cut down the timber with his own men and sold it advantageously, and improved affairs. Peter Vasílevich vowed, and he kept his word, not to wear anything but his father's wadded coat, and a sail-cloth ulster which he had made for himself, nor to travel otherwise than in a cart with peasant horses, until all the debts should be paid. He endeavoured to extend this stoical manner of life to his whole family, so far as his servile respect for his mother, which he considered his duty, permitted him to. In the drawing-room he stutteringly worshipped his mother, fulfilled all her wishes, and scolded the servants if they did not do what she had commanded; but in his cabinet and in the office he was very exacting, if a duck had been taken to the table without his permission, or a peasant had been sent by order of Anna Dmítrievna to ask about a neighbour's health, or peasant girls were told to go to the woods to pick berries, when they ought to have been in the garden, weeding.

Four years later all the debts were paid, and Peter Vasílevich, who had gone to St. Petersburg, returned from there in a new suit and in a tarantas. In spite of this

flourishing state of affairs, he kept the same stoical inclinations, of which he seemed gloomily to boast before his own people and before strangers, and he used to say, stammering, "He who is anxious to see me will be glad to see me in a sheepskin, and will eat my cabbage soup and buckwheat porridge. I eat them," he added. In every word and movement of his was expressed pride, which was based on the conviction that he had sacrificed himself for his mother and had saved the estate, and a contempt for others if they had not done something similar.

The mother and the daughter were of entirely different character, and in many things dissimilar to each other. The mother was one of the most agreeable women in society, always equally kindly and gay. Everything pleasing and joyful gave her genuine happiness. Even the faculty of enjoying the sight of merrymaking young people, a characteristic which is met with only in the case of the kindliest old people, was highly developed in her. Her daughter, Avdótya Vasílevna, was, on the contrary, of a serious turn of mind, or rather of that indifferently absent-minded and groundlessly haughty character which is so common in unmarried beauties. When she tried to be mirthful, her merriment was of a peculiar sort: it looked as though she made fun of herself, or of the person to whom she was speaking, or of the whole world, which she certainly did not mean to do. I often wondered, and asked myself what it was she intended to say when she used such phrases as: "Yes, I am awfully beautiful; why, of course, everybody loves me," and so forth.

Anna Dmítrievna was always active: she had a passion for arranging her house and garden, for flowers, canaries, and pretty trifles. Her rooms and garden were small and simple, but everything was fixed so precisely and neatly, and so bore that common character of facile mirth which is expressed in a pretty waltz or polka, that the word

"toy," which was frequently used by her guests to praise things, exactly fitted Anna Dmítrievna's garden and rooms. Anna Dmítrievna herself was a toy, — small, thin, with a fresh colour in her face, with pretty little hands, always happy and becomingly dressed. Only the dark violet veins which stood out too much in relief upon her small hands destroyed this ensemble.

Avdótya Vasílevna, on the contrary, hardly ever did anything, and not only did not care to busy herself with any trifles or flowers, but even cared very little about herself, and always ran away to get dressed when guests arrived. But when she came back in her fine clothes she was uncommonly beautiful, with the exception of a cold and monotonous expression of the eyes and the smile which is to be found in all very beautiful persons. Her severely regular and comely face and her stately figure seemed to be saying all the time, "If you please, you may look at me!"

Yet, in spite of the lively character of the mother and the indifferent, absent-minded appearance of the daughter, something told you that the first one had never before, nor even then, loved anything, except that which was pretty and jolly, and that Avdótya Vasílevna was one of those natures who, when they once fall in love, sacrifice all their life to him whom they love.

XXXIV.

FATHER'S MARRIAGE

FATHER was forty-eight years old when he married for the second time. His wife was Avdótya Vasílevna Epifánov.

Having arrived at the estate in the spring, all alone with the girls, papa, I imagine, was in that agitated, happy, and communicative frame of mind which generally comes over gamblers who stop playing after some great winnings. He felt that he had much unexpended happiness left, which he could make use of for successes in life in general, if he no longer wished to utilize it in cards. Besides, it was spring, he unexpectedly had a large sum of money, he was alone, and suffered ennui. When he talked to Yákov about affairs and recalled the endless litigation with the Epifánovs, and fair Avdótya Vasílevna, whom he had not seen for a long time, I imagine his having said to Yákov: "Do you know, Yákov Kharlámpych, rather than bother much longer about this litigation, I have a mind to let them have that accursed piece of land. Well, what do you think of it?"

I imagine how Yákov's fingers twitched negatively behind his back at such a question, and how he proved that "all the same, our cause is just, Peter Aleksándrovich."

But papa ordered his carriage out, donned his fashionable olive wadded coat, combed what was left of his hair, sprinkled some perfume on his handkerchief, and in the happiest frame of mind, produced by his conviction that

he was acting like a great gentleman, but especially by the hope that he would see a beautiful woman, drove over to his neighbour's.

All I know is that papa did not upon his first visit find Peter Vasílevich at home, for he was in the field, but passed an hour with the ladies. I imagine how profuse he was in civilities, how he charmed them, tapping his soft boot, lisping, and casting tender glances. I imagine, too, how the gay old woman suddenly took a liking for him, and how her fair, cold daughter suddenly became enlivened.

When a servant-girl came running out of breath to announce that old Irténev himself was calling at the house, I imagine how Peter Vasílevich answered, angrily, "What of it, if he is?" and how he in consequence thereof went home as slowly as possible; how, upon arriving in his cabinet, he purposely put on the dirtiest overcoat and sent word to the cook not to dare add anything to the dinner, even if the ladies did command him to.

Later I frequently saw papa with Epifánov, therefore I can vividly represent to myself that first meeting. I imagine how, in spite of papa's proposition to settle the litigation by arbitration, Peter Vasílevich was sullen and angry, because he had sacrificed his career for his mother, while papa had done nothing of the kind; how nothing surprised him; and how papa, disregarding his sullenness, was playful and merry, and treated him like a wonderful joker, which partly offended Peter Vasílevich, and partly made him surrender in spite of himself. Papa, with his tendency to turn everything into a joke, called Peter Vasílevich colonel, and although Epifánov once in my presence remarked, stuttering worse than ever and blushing from annoyance, that he was not a colonel, but a lieutenant, papa called him colonel again five minutes later.

Lyúbochka told me that, before our arrival in the country, they had met the Epifánovs daily, and had very

pleasant times with them. Papa, with his customary cleverness in arranging things originally, entertainingly, and at the same time simply and elegantly, gave now hunting parties, now angling parties, now firework displays, at which the Epifánovs were present. "And it would have been even more enjoyable if it were not for that intolerable Peter Vasílevich, who was sullen, and stuttered, and spoiled everything," said Lyúbochka.

Since our arrival, the Epifánovs had called but twice, and once we went to see them. After St. Peter's Day, father's name-day, when they and a large number of guests called, our relations with the Epifánovs for some reason or other were completely stopped, and only papa continued to visit them.

This is what I noticed in the short time in which I saw papa together with Dúnichka, as her mother called her. Papa was continually in that happy frame of mind by which I was struck on the day of our arrival. He was so merry, young, full of life, and happy, that the beams of that happiness extended to all those who surrounded him and involuntarily communicated the same disposition to them. He never stirred a step from Avdótya Vasílevna when she was in the room, continually paid her such sweet compliments that I was ashamed for him, or, looking at her in silence, jerked his shoulder in an impassioned and self-satisfied manner, and coughed, or, smiling, at times spoke to her in a whisper; and he did all this with an expression which said, "I am just jesting," which was characteristic of him in the most serious affairs.

Avdótya Vasílevna seemed to have appropriated from papa the expression of happiness which almost uninterruptedly shone in her large blue eyes, except in those moments when she was seized by fits of bashfulness, so that I, who knew that feeling well, felt sorry and pained for her. At such moments she apparently was afraid of every glance and motion, thinking that everybody looked

at her, thought of her alone, and found everything about her wrong. She looked timidly at every one, the colour of her cheeks kept changing, and she began to speak loudly and boldly, mostly silly things, and she felt that papa and everybody heard them, and blushed even more. But papa did not notice her insipidities under these circumstances, and continued to watch her with the same impassioned, mirthful ecstasy, coughing now and then. I noticed that, although Avdótya Vasílevna was taken by fits of bashfulness without any cause whatsoever, these sometimes followed soon after papa's mentioning some young and beautiful woman. Her frequent changes from pensiveness to that kind of strange, uneasy merriment of which I spoke before, the repetition of papa's favourite words and turns of speech, the continuation with others of conversations which were begun with papa, — all that would have explained to me papa's relations with Avdótya Vasílevna, if the *dramatis persona* had been another than papa, and I a little older; but at that time I did not suspect anything, even when papa was very much put out by a letter which he had received from Peter Vasílevich, and stopped calling upon them until the end of August.

Toward the end of August he again started to visit his neighbours, and on the day preceding our (Volódya's and mine) departure for Moscow, he announced to us that he was about to marry Avdótya Vasílevna Epifánov.

XXXV.

HOW WE RECEIVED THE NEWS

On the day preceding that official announcement, everybody in the house knew and judged variously of this affair. Mimi did not leave her room all day, and wept. Kátenka sat with her and came out only to dinner, with an offended expression on her face, which she obviously had adopted from her mother; Lyúbochka, on the contrary, was very merry, and said at dinner that she knew an excellent secret, but that she would not tell it to anybody.

"There is nothing excellent in your secret," replied Volódya, who did not share her pleasure. "If you were able to think seriously about matters, you would understand that this is, on the contrary, very bad."

Lyúbochka looked fixedly at him in amazement, and grew silent.

After dinner Volódya wanted to take my hand, but, becoming frightened, no doubt, lest it should be considered a tenderness, only touched my elbow, and beckoned to me to come to the parlour.

"Do you know the secret of which Lyúbochka was speaking?" he said to me when he was sure we were alone.

We rarely spoke without witnesses, or at all seriously about anything, so that when this happened we both felt ill at ease, and, as Volódya used to say, little imps began to jump up and down in our eyes; but this time he, in answer to the confusion which was expressed in my face,

continued to look fixedly and seriously at me, with an expression which said: "There is nothing to get confused about; we are brothers after all, and ought to consult together about an important family matter." I understood him, and he continued:

"Papa is about to marry Miss Epifánov, you know?"

I nodded, because I had already heard about it.

"It is very unfortunate," continued Volódya.

"Why?"

"Why?" he answered, annoyed. "It is a great pleasure to have such a stammerer of an uncle as the colonel, and all that family. And she herself just now seems kind and all that, but who knows what she will be later? To us, I must say, it does not make much difference, but Lyúbochka must soon make her début in society. With such a *belle-mère* it is not especially pleasant; she even speaks poor French, and what manners can she teach her? A *poissarde*, and nothing else; I admit she is kind, but a *poissarde* all the same," concluded Volódya, evidently very much satisfied with the appellation "*poissarde*."

However strange it was to hear Volódya judging papa's choice so deliberately, I thought he was right.

"But why does papa marry?" I asked.

"That is a mysterious story, God knows. I only know that Peter Vasílevich advised him to marry and insisted upon it, and that papa did not want to, and then he took a fancy, — a kind of chivalry; it is a mysterious story. I have just begun to understand father," continued Volódya (it stung me to the quick to hear him say "father" instead of "papa"). "He is a fine man, good and kind, but so frivolous and changeable — it is remarkable! He cannot look in cold blood at a woman. You know yourself, there is not a woman he knows with whom he is not in love. You know, Mimi too."

"You don't say?"

"I tell you I lately found out he was in love with Mimi when she was young, and he wrote her verses, and there was something between them." And Volódya laughed.

"Impossible!" I said in wonderment.

"But the main thing," continued Volódya, again seriously, and suddenly speaking in French, "all our relatives will be just delighted with this marriage! And, no doubt, she will have children."

I was so impressed by Volódya's common sense and foresight, that I did not know what to reply.

Just then Lyúbochka stepped up to us.

"So you know?" she asked, with a happy face.

"Yes," said Volódya, "only I wonder, Lyúbochka, — you are not a baby in swaddling-clothes: what joy can it be for you that papa is to marry a slut?"

Lyúbochka suddenly looked serious, and fell to thinking.

"Volódya, why slut? How dare you speak thus of Avdótya Vasílevna? If papa marries her, she cannot be a slut."

"Well, not a slut; I was just saying that, still —"

"Don't say 'still,'" Lyúbochka interrupted him, excitedly. "I did not say that the young lady with whom you were in love was a slut. How can you speak thus of papa and of an excellent woman? Though you are the eldest brother, you must not talk this way to me."

"But why may one not discuss —"

"You dare not discuss," Lyúbochka again interrupted him. "You dare not discuss such a father as ours. Mimi may, but not you, our elder brother."

"No, you do not understand anything yet," said Volódya, contemptuously. "Well, is it good that a Dúnichka Epifánov should take the place of your deceased mamma?"

Lyúbochka grew silent for a moment, and suddenly tears appeared in her eyes.

"I knew that you were haughty, but I did not think you would be quite so bad," she said, and went away from us.

"Into the roll," said Volódya, with a serio-comic face and dull eyes. "Go and discuss with them," he continued, as if in self-reproach for having forgotten himself so far as to condescend to talk to Lyúbochka.

The next day the weather was bad, and neither papa nor the ladies were down to tea, when I walked into the drawing-room. In the night there had been a cold autumn drizzle; over the sky scudded the remainders of the cloud which had been exhausted in the night, and the sun, which stood quite high in the heavens, glimmered faintly through it. It was windy, damp, and chilly. The door into the garden was open; on the floor of the terrace, black with the dampness, were drying up some puddles of the night rain. The open door, driven by the wind, tugged at the iron hook; the paths were damp and dirty; the old birches with their bared white boughs, the shrubs and the grass, the nettles, the currant bushes, and the elders, with the pale sides of the leaves turned outwards, swayed in one spot and seemed to be anxious to tear themselves away from their roots; from the linden avenue came flying round yellow leaves, whirling and racing against each other, and, when they grew wet, lodging in the moist path and in the moist, dark green aftermath of the meadow.

My thoughts were busy with the coming marriage of my father, considering it from the same point of view as Volódya. The future of my sister, of ourselves, and of father did not present itself encouragingly to me. I was provoked at the thought that a strange, but especially, a "young" woman, who had no such rights, would suddenly in many respects take the place of — whom? — a mere "young" woman would take the place of my deceased mother! I was aggrieved, and father seemed

ever more blameworthy. Just then I heard his and Volódya's voice in the officiating-room. I did not wish to see father at that moment, and walked away from the door; but Lyúbochka came after me, and told me that father wanted to see me.

He was standing in the drawing-room, leaning with his hand on the piano, and impatiently and at the same time solemnly looked in my direction. On his face was no longer that expression of youth and happiness which I had observed heretofore in him. He looked sad. Volódya walked up and down the room, with his pipe in his hand. I went up to father and saluted him.

"Well, my friends," he said, with firmness, raising his head, and speaking in that very rapid tone with which one tells obviously unpleasant things that are past deliberation, "you know, I think, that I am about to marry Avdótya Vasílevna." He was silent for a moment. "I did not wish to marry again after your mamma, but" — he stopped for a minute — "but — it is evidently my fate. Dúnichka is a good and dear girl, and not very young; I hope you will love her, children, for she already loves you with all her heart, she is so good. It is time for you," he said, turning to me and Volódya, and speaking rapidly that we might not interrupt him, "it is time for you to depart, but I shall stay here until New Year's, and then shall come to Moscow," — he again hesitated, — "with my wife and with Lyúbochka." It was painful for me to see father feeling ill at ease and guilty before us; I walked up to him, but Volódya continued to smoke and, lowering his head, paced the room.

"So here is, my friends, what your old father has concocted," concluded papa, blushing, coughing, and giving his hand to me and to Volódya. There were tears in his eyes, when he said that, and the hand which he stretched out to Volódya, who was at that time at the other end of the room, trembled a little, I noticed. I was painfully

impressed by the sight of that trembling hand, and the odd thought came to me, which affected me even more, that papa had served in the year '12, and had, no doubt, been a brave officer. I held his large venous hand, and kissed it. He pressed mine firmly, and suddenly, sobbing through his tears, took Lyúbochka's black head into both his hands and began to kiss her eyes. Volódya pretended that he had dropped his pipe and, bending down, softly wiped his eyes with his clenched hand and, wishing to remain unnoticed, left the room.

XXXVI.

THE UNIVERSITY

THE wedding was to come off in two weeks; but lectures at the university were to begin soon, and Volódya and I left for Moscow in the beginning of September. The Nekhlyúdovs had also come back from the country. Dmítri, with whom I had promised at parting to correspond, and with whom, of course, I had not exchanged one letter, immediately came to see me, and we decided that he should take me on the morrow to the university to introduce me to my lectures.

It was a bright, sunny day.

The moment I entered the auditorium, I felt that my personality disappeared in the mass of young, happy faces which billowed through the door and in the corridors, in the bright sunlight that penetrated through the large windows. The consciousness of belonging to that great society was an agreeable feeling. Among these many faces I found but few acquaintances, and with these my acquaintance was limited to a shake of the head and the words, "Good morning, Irténev!" All about me, hands were pressed, and the crowd surged, and words of friendship, smiles, civilities, and jokes were showered on all sides. I felt the common bond that united all that young society, and sorrowfully observed that that bond had slighted me. But this was only a momentary impression. In consequence of this impres-

The Kremlin at Moscow in 1823.

sion, and of the mortification generated by it, I soon found, on the contrary, that it was very good indeed I did not belong to that society, that I ought to have a circle of my own, of decent people, and seated myself on the third bench, where sat Count B——, Baron Z——, Prince R——, Ívin and other gentlemen of that class, of whom I knew only Ívin and Count B——. These gentlemen, however, looked at me in such a manner that I felt I did not quite belong to their society. I began to observe everything that took place round me. Seménov, with his gray, dishevelled hair and white teeth, and in his unbuttoned coat, sat not far from me, leaning on his elbows, and chewing at a pen. The Gymnasiast, who had passed the examinations as first, sat on the first bench, his cheek still tied up with a black necktie, and played with the silver watch-key on his velvet vest. Ikónin, who had managed to get into the university, sat on a desk in his blue striped pantaloons that covered his whole boot, and laughed and cried that he was on Parnassus. Ilínka, who, to my astonishment, bowed to me not only coldly but contemptuously, as if to remind me that we were all equals here, sat in front of me and, placing his lean legs carelessly on the bench (this, I thought, he did on my account), conversed with another student, and now and then glanced at me. Ívin's company near me spoke French. These gentlemen seemed uncommonly stupid to me. Every word which I caught from their conversation seemed to me not only insipid, but even incorrect, simply not French (" *Ce n'est pas français*," I said mentally to myself), but the attitudes, speeches, and acts of Seménov, Ilínka, and others appeared to me ignoble, indecent, not *comme il faut*.

I belonged to no circle, and grew angry, because I felt myself lonely and incapable of making friends. A student in front of me was biting his nails which were full of red slivers, and that so disgusted me that I changed

my seat some distance away from him. On that first day, I remember, I felt quite sad.

When the professor entered, and everybody stirred and grew silent, I remember how I extended my satirical glance to him, and how the professor began his lecture with an introductory sentence in which I could see no sense whatsoever. I wanted the lecture to be so clever from the beginning to the end that it should be impossible to throw anything out, or add another word to it. Being disappointed in this, I immediately set out to make eighteen profiles, connected into a circle in the shape of a flower, beneath the title "First Lecture" of the beautifully bound note-book which I had brought with me; I only occasionally pretended to be writing, so that the professor, who I was sure was very much interested in me, might think that I was taking down notes. Having decided at this lecture that it was not necessary, and even was stupid, to write out all the professor said, I observed this rule to the end of my course.

At the next lectures I did not feel my loneliness so much, for I had become acquainted with a number of students whose hands I pressed and with whom I talked; but for some reason or other no close relations were established between my companions and me, and I was frequently given to melancholy and feigning. I could not be on a friendly footing with Ívin's company and the aristocrats, as everybody called them, because, as I now remember, I was savage and rude with them, and bowed to them only after they had saluted me, and they evidently had little need of my acquaintance. With the majority, however, this originated from an entirely different cause. The moment I felt that a fellow student was taking kindly to me, I gave him to understand that I dined with Prince Iván Ivánovich, and that I had a vehicle of my own. I said all that in order to show myself from my most advantageous side, and that my

companion should like me better still; but nearly every time, as soon as I had informed my companion of my relationship with Prince Iván Ivánovich and of my vehicle, he suddenly, to my amazement, became haughty and cold to me.

We had a stipendiary student, Óperov, a modest, extremely talented, and industrious young man, who always gave his stiff hand like a board, without bending his fingers, and making no motion with it, so that his jesting fellow students gave him their hands in the same manner, and called that kind of a hand-shake the "board handshake." I nearly always sat down by his side, and frequently conversed with him. I liked Óperov more especially for his free opinions about the professors. He very clearly and distinctly defined the merits and faults of each professor's instruction, and at times even made fun of them, all of which being uttered with his soft voice issuing from his tiny mouth affected me very strangely and powerfully. In spite of this, he continued to take down all the lectures without exception, writing them out carefully in a fine hand. We were becoming friendly, and decided to prepare our lectures together, and his small, gray, near-sighted eyes were beginning to turn to me with an expression of pleasure, whenever I came to take my seat near him. But I found it necessary, in talking with him, to let him know that my mother, dying, had asked father not to send us to a public school, and that all the stipendiary students might be very wise men, but not the people for me — not the right class of people. "*Ce ne sont pas des gens comme il faut*," I said, stammering and feeling that I was blushing. Óperov said nothing to me, but at the next lectures did not salute me first, did not give me his "board," did not converse, and when I took my seat, bent his head sidewise, a finger's length away from his note-books, and pretended to be looking into them. I wondered at Óperov's causeless coolness. As a

jeune homme de bonne maison I considered it improper to seek the favour of a stipendiary student Óperov, and left him alone, though, I confess, his coolness mortified me. Once I arrived before him, and as it happened to be a lecture of a favourite professor, which was attended by students who were not in the habit of coming to their lectures regularly, all the places were occupied; so I seated myself in Óperov's seat, put my note-books on his desk, and walked out. When I returned to the lecture-room, I noticed that my books had been removed to a back desk, and that Óperov was in my seat. I remarked to him that I had placed my books there.

"I don't know," he answered, with sudden irritation and without looking at me.

"I am telling you that I placed my books there," I said, purposely in anger, thinking that I might frighten him with my boldness. "Everybody saw it," I added, looking round at the students, but though many gazed curiously at me, not one of them said anything.

"There are no reserved seats here, and he who comes first takes one," said Óperov, angrily straightening himself in his seat and for a moment looking at me with a provoked countenance.

"That means that you are a boor," I said.

I thought that Operov mumbled something, and I think it was, "And you are a silly boy!" but I did not hear it at all. And what use would it have been for me to have heard it? Just to call each other names, like *manants?* (I was very fond of that word "*manant*," and it served me as an answer and solution to many puzzling relations.) I might have said something else to him, but just then the door slammed, and the professor in his blue uniform, shuffling his feet, rapidly walked up to his platform.

And yet, before the examinations, when I needed some note-books, Óperov, mindful of his promise, offered me his, and invited me to study with him.

XXXVII.

AFFAIRS OF THE HEART

At that time I was much occupied with affairs of the heart. I was three times in love. Once I became passionately enamoured of a very stout lady who used to ride in Freitag's Manege; every Tuesday and Friday, when she frequented it, I went there to get a glimpse of her, but I was every time so afraid that she would see me, and, therefore, stood so far away from her and ran away so fast when she was about to pass by me, and so rudely turned aside when she looked in my direction, that I never got a good look at her face, and never found out whether she was really pretty or not.

Dubkóv, who knew the lady, having discovered me once in the Manege, where I stood concealed behind the lackeys and the furs which they held, and having learned from Dmítri of my infatuation, so frightened me with his proposition to introduce me to that Amazon, that I rushed headlong out of the place, and at the mere thought that he told her about me, never again dared enter the Manege, not even behind the lackeys, for fear of meeting her.

Whenever I was in love with strange, particularly married, women, I was seized by fits of bashfulness a thousand times stronger than what I experienced before Sónichka. I feared nothing so much in the world as that the object of my love should find out about my love and even of my existence. It appeared to me that if she should learn of the feeling which I had for her, it would

be such an insult to her that she could never forgive me. And indeed, if that Amazon had known in detail how I watched her from behind the lackeys, and imagined raping her and taking her to the country, and how I was going to live with her there, and what I was going to do with her, she no doubt would have been justly insulted. I could not form a clear conception of her knowing me without knowing at once all my thoughts of her, and therefore I could not imagine there was nothing disgraceful in an acquaintance with her.

Another time I fell in love with Sónichka, upon seeing her with my sister. My second love for her had passed long ago, but I became enamoured of her for the third time, when Lyúbochka gave me a copy-book of verses, copied by Sónichka, in which Lérmontov's "Demon" was in many gloomy passages of love underlined with red ink, and marked with little flowers. I recalled that Volódya had the year before kissed the purse of his lady-love, and so I tried to do the same, and really, when I was one evening all alone in my room and, looking at a little flower, began to meditate and put it to my lips, I experienced a certain pleasurable and tearful sensation, and was again in love, or supposed I was, for a few days.

Finally, for the third time that winter I was enamoured of a young lady with whom Volódya was in love, and who visited us. In that young lady, as I now remember, there was absolutely nothing beautiful, particularly of that kind of beauty which I admired. She was the daughter of a well-known, clever, and learned lady of Moscow, and was small, haggard, with long English locks, and a translucent profile. Everybody said that she was even more clever and learned than her mother, but I was entirely unable to judge of that, because I felt such a servile terror at the thought of her cleverness and learning that I dared but once to speak to her, with indescribable trepidation. But the ecstasy of Volódya, who

was never incommoded by the presence of others in giving vent to that ecstasy, was communicated to me with such force that I fell passionately in love with the lady. I did not tell Volódya of my love, being convinced that it would not please him very much to hear that "two brothers were in love with the same maiden." The chief pleasure I derived from this infatuation consisted in the thought that our love was so pure that, in spite of the fact that its object was one and the same charming creature, we remained friends and ever ready to make sacrifices for each other, if the opportunity offered itself. However, Volódya did not quite share my opinion of the ever ready sacrifice, for he was so passionately in love that he wanted to box the ears of, and call out to a duel a certain real diplomat who, it was said, was about to marry her. But it pleased me very much to be able to sacrifice my feeling, perhaps, because it did not cost me much labour, having but once held with her a bombastic discourse about the value of classical music,— and my love, however much I tried to sustain it, was dispersed the following day.

XXXVIII.

SOCIETY

THE social pleasures which I had dreamt of taking up, upon entering the university, in emulation of my elder brother, completely disenchanted me that winter. Volódya danced a great deal, and papa also drove out to balls with his young wife, but I was considered either too young, or unfit for such enjoyments, and nobody introduced me in those houses where balls were given. In spite of my vow of frankness with Dmítri, I told nobody, not even him, how anxious I was to attend balls, and how it mortified and angered me that they forgot me and apparently regarded me as a kind of a philosopher, so that in consequence thereof, I tried to appear like one.

That winter there was a reception at the house of Princess Kornákov. She personally invited us all, including me, and I went for the first time to a ball. Volódya came into my room before we were to start, and wanted to see me dressed. This act of his greatly surprised and puzzled me. It seemed to me that the desire always to be well dressed was blameworthy, and had to be concealed; but he, on the contrary, regarded this desire as so natural and necessary that he said quite openly that he was afraid I should disgrace myself. He ordered me to put on lacquered boots, was horrified when I wanted to put on chamois-leather gloves, fixed my watch in a particular manner, and took me to Blacksmith Bridge to a hairdresser. They curled my hair. Volódya stood off and looked at me from a distance.

"Now it is all right, but can't you really smooth down those tufts of his?" he said, turning to the hair-dresser.

But no matter how much Monsieur Charles smeared my tufts with a sticky essence, they rose again when I put on my hat, and my whole curled head looked worse to me than before. My only salvation lay in an affectation of carelessness. Only under such conditions did my exterior look like something.

Volódya, it seems, was of the same opinion, for he asked me to undo the curls, and when I did so and the effect still was bad, he no longer looked at me, and all the way to the Kornákovs was incommunicative and melancholy.

Volódya and I entered the house of the Kornákovs boldly; but when the princess invited me to dance, and I, who had come with this one aim in view, told her that I did not dance, I lost my courage and, remaining all alone among strange people, fell into my unconquerable, ever increasing bashfulness. I stood silently all the evening in one place.

During a waltz one of the young princesses walked up to me and asked me, with the official civility of her family, why I did not dance. I remember how I was put out by the question, and how, entirely against my will, a self-satisfied smile covered my face, and I began to tell her in French, with high-flown turns and introductory phrases, such dreadful nonsense that even now, after tens of years, I have to blush when I think of it. It must be that the music so affected me, by exciting my nerves, and drowning, as I supposed, the less intelligible parts of my speech. I said something or other about high life, about the emptiness of men and women, and finally was so completely lost in a maze of words, that I had to stop in the middle of a sentence which it was utterly impossible to finish.

Even the thoroughbred worldly princess was put out of

countenance, and reproachfully looked at me. I smiled. At this critical moment Volódya, seeing that I was speaking excitedly, and, no doubt, wishing to know how I explained away my refusal to dance, walked up to us with Dubkóv. When he saw my smiling countenance and the frightened expression of the princess, and heard the awful bosh with which I ended my discourse, he blushed and turned away. The princess rose and walked off. I was smiling, but suffered so terribly from the consciousness of my stupidity that I was ready to go through the floor, and felt the necessity of stirring about and saying something, in order to change my situation in some manner. I went up to Dubkóv and asked him whether he had danced many dances with *her*. I pretended to be playful and merry, but in reality I implored aid of that very Dubkóv whom I had told to shut up at the dinner at Yar's. Dubkóv looked as though he had not heard me and turned away in another direction. I moved up to Volódya, and said to him, with an expenditure of all my strength, endeavouring to give a playful tone to my voice, "Well, Volódya, are you tired?" But Volódya looked at me as much as to say, "You do not speak to me that way when we are alone," and silently walked away from me, apparently afraid that I might stick to him.

"My Lord, even my brother abandons me!" I thought.

I somehow did not have sufficient strength to leave. I stood sullen, in one spot, all during the evening, and only when all had congregated in the antechamber, ready to depart, and a lackey caught my overcoat on the edge of my hat, so that it rose, I laughed painfully through tears and, without addressing anybody in particular, said, "*Comme c'est gracieux!*"

XXXIX.

A CAROUSAL

ALTHOUGH, under Dmítri's influence, I did not yet abandon myself to the common student enjoyments which are called "carousals," I had occasion to be present at such an entertainment that winter, but I carried away from it a rather unpleasant sensation. It happened like this.

In the beginning of the year Baron Z——, a tall, blond young man, with a very solemn expression on his face, invited us all, at a lecture, to his house for a sociable evening. When I say all of us, I mean all the fellow students of our course who were more or less *comme il faut*, and among whom, of course, were neither Grap, nor Seménov, nor Óperov, nor any of those insignificant gentlemen. Volódya smiled contemptuously when he heard that I was going to a carousal of the first year students, but I expected an unusual and intense pleasure from this entirely unfamiliar pastime, and punctually at the appointed time, at eight o'clock, I was at the house of Baron Z——.

Baron Z——, in an unbuttoned coat and white waistcoat, received his guests in the lighted parlour and drawing-room of the small house in which his parents lived, who, on the occasion of the celebration, had granted him the use of the reception-rooms. In the corridor could be seen the heads and dresses of curious maids, and in the buffet-room flashed by the dress of a lady whom I took

for the baroness. There were some twenty guests, all of them students except Mr. Frost, who had come with Ívin, and one tall, red-faced private gentleman who had charge of the celebration, and who was introduced to all as a relative of the baron, and a former student of the university of Dorpat. The extremely bright illumination and the usual, conventional outfit of the reception-rooms at first acted so chillingly upon that youthful company that all kept close to the wall, except a few bolder fellows and the Dorpat student, who, having unbuttoned his waistcoat, seemed to be at the same time in every room, and in every corner of every room, and filled the whole room with his sonorous, agreeable, and continuous tenor voice. The other students were mostly silent, or modestly discussed their professors, the sciences, examinations, in general, serious matters. Everybody without exception watched the door of the buffet-room, and, though trying to conceal it, bore an expression which said, "Well, it is time to begin." I myself felt that it was time to begin, and waited for the beginning with impatient joy.

After tea, which the lackeys served to the guests, the Dorpat student asked Frost, in Russian:

"Dost thou know how to make the punch, Frost?"

"*O ja!*" answered Frost, moving his calves, but the Dorpat student again said to him in Russian:

"Then take it into thine hands" (they spoke "thou" to each other, as schoolmates of the Dorpat University), and Frost, taking a few long steps with his bent muscular legs, began to pass from the drawing-room to the buffet-room and back again, and soon there appeared on the table a large bowl with a ten-pound head of sugar in it, held in place by three crossed student swords. Baron Z—— in the meantime walked up to all the guests who had gathered in the drawing-room and were looking at the bowl, and with an unchangeable solemn face repeated nearly the

same thing: "Gentlemen, let us drink in student fashion the round bowl, '*Bruderschaft*,' for there is no comradeship in our course. Why don't you unbutton your coats, or take them off entirely, just as he has done?" And, indeed, the Dorpat student, having taken off his coat and rolled up his white shirt-sleeves above his elbows, and firmly planted his legs, was already burning the rum in the bowl.

"Gentlemen, put out the lights!" suddenly cried the Dorpat student as loud and sonorously as if we all were crying together. But we looked in silence at the bowl and at the white shirt of the Dorpat student, and all felt that the solemn moment had arrived.

"*Löschen Sie die Lichter aus, Frost!*" again cried the Dorpat student, this time in German, probably because he was quite excited. Frost and the rest of us began to blow out the lights. The room grew dark, and only the white shirt-sleeves and hands that supported the head of sugar with the swords were lighted up by the bluish flame. The loud tenor of the Dorpat student was no longer the only one, for they were talking and laughing in all the corners of the room. Many took off their coats (especially those who had fine linen, and very white shirts), and I did the same, and knew that now it was beginning. Although there was nothing merry as yet, I was quite convinced that it would be nice as soon as we should drink a glass of the brewing drink.

The drink was prepared. The Dorpat student poured out the punch in glasses, spilling a great deal on the table, and called out: "Now, gentlemen, come on!" When we all had well-filled sticky glasses in our hands, the Dorpat student and Frost sang a German song, in which the exclamation "*Juchhe!*" was frequently repeated. We sang with them as best we could, clinked our glasses, praised the punch, and, crossing hands with each other, or in simple fashion, began to drink the sweet, strong liquid.

There was nothing more to wait for, — the carousal was in full swing.

I emptied a whole glass; they filled another for me; the blood beat strongly in my temples; the light looked blood-red to me; everybody around me laughed and cried, and yet it not only seemed not jolly to me, but I was even convinced that all of us suffered ennui, and that we merely found it necessary to pretend that it all was very jolly. The Dorpat student was probably the only one who did not feign: he grew ever more bloodshot and ubiquitous, filled everybody's empty glasses, and spilled more and more on the table, which finally grew all sticky and sweet.

I do not remember everything that happened, or in what order, but I recall that I was that evening awfully fond of that Dorpat student and of Frost, learned by heart the German song, and kissed their sweet lips; I also recollect that on that same evening I hated the Dorpat student, and wanted to bang him with a chair, but restrained myself; I recollect that, in addition to the feeling of disobedience of all my limbs, which I had experienced at the dinner at Yar's, my head ached and whirled in such a terrible manner that I was dreadfully afraid I should die right off; I also recollect that we all seated ourselves for some reason on the floor, waved our hands, imitating the motion of oars, and sang "Down our mother Vólga," and that I thought all the time that it was not necessary to do all this; I recollect also that, lying on the floor, my legs caught in somebody's, and I fought with him in gipsy fashion and sprained his neck, whereat I thought that it would not have happened if he had not been drunk; I recollect also that we had supper, and drank something else, that I went outside to cool off, that my head felt cold, and that, at parting, I noticed that it was dreadfully dark, that the foot-rest of the vehicle had in the meanwhile become crooked and sleek, and that it

was not possible to hold on to Kuzmá, because he was very weak and flaunted like a rag; but, above all, I recollect that during that evening I never stopped feeling that I acted very foolishly, pretending that it was jolly, that I liked to drink much, and that I never thought of being drunk, and I also felt that the rest were acting just as foolishly when they pretended the same. I thought that each one in particular was just as dissatisfied as I, but that he supposed that he alone experienced that unpleasant sensation, and, consequently, regarded it as his duty to pretend to be merry, in order not to impair the general merriment; besides, though it may seem strange, I considered it my duty to pretend, for the reason alone, if for no other, that into that bowl had been poured three bottles of champagne, at ten roubles, and ten bottles of rum, at four roubles, which made in all seventy roubles, not counting the supper. I was so convinced of it, that next day I was exceedingly surprised during the lecture, when my companions, who had been present at the entertainment of Baron Z——, not only were not ashamed of what they had done there, but told of it in such a manner that the other students might hear it. They said that the carousal was fine, that the Dorpat boys were great at it, and that the twenty students had drunk forty bottles of rum, and that many of them were left for dead under the table. I could not understand why they should tell, and moreover lie, about themselves.

XL.

MY FRIENDSHIP WITH THE NEKHLYÚDOVS

THAT winter I frequently saw not only Dmítri, who was in the habit of visiting us, but also his whole family, with whom I was getting better acquainted.

The Nekhlyúdovs, mother, aunt, and daughter, passed all their evenings at home, and the princess was fond of having young people come to see them in the evening, that is, men who, she said, were able to pass a whole evening without cards or dancing. There must have been a dearth of such men, because I rarely saw any guests there, though I called nearly every day. I grew accustomed to the members of that family, and to their various dispositions, formed a clear conception of their mutual relations, got used to the rooms and furniture, and, when there were no guests, felt perfectly at ease, except when I was left alone with Várenka. It always seemed to me that she was not a very pretty girl, and that she was exceedingly anxious that I should fall in love with her. But this embarrassment, too, soon began to pass away. She was so unconstrained in her manner, whether she talked to me, to her brother, or to Lyubóv Sergyéevna, that I acquired the habit of looking at her simply as at a person to whom it was neither disgraceful nor dangerous to express the pleasure which her company afforded. During all the time of my acquaintance with her, she appeared on certain days very homely, while on others I thought she was not so ill-looking, but it never occurred to me to ask myself whether I was in love with her, or

not. I had occasion to speak to her directly, but more often I conversed with her by addressing Lyubóv Sergyéevna or Dmítri, and this latter method gave me especial pleasure. It was a great pleasure for me to speak in her presence, to listen to her singing, and in general to know that she was in the room while I was there. I was now rarely worried by the thought what my relations to Várenka would be in the future, and by the dreams of self-sacrifice for my friend if he should fall in love with my sister. And if such thoughts and dreams did come to me, I felt myself sufficiently contented in the present, and unconsciously warded off the thoughts of the future.

In spite of this closer acquaintance, I continued to regard it as my invariable duty to conceal my real sentiments and inclinations from all the family of the Nekhlyúdovs, and especially from Várenka, and endeavoured to pass for an entirely different young man from what I really was, and even to appear like one who could not have any existence in reality. I tried to appear impassioned, went into ecstasies, sighed, and made passionate gestures, whenever I wanted to express my great pleasure, and at the same time attempted to appear indifferent to every extraordinary occurrence which I had witnessed, or of which they told me; tried to appear a malicious jester for whom there was nothing holy, and at the same time a shrewd observer; tried to appear logical in all my acts, precise and punctual in the affairs of life, and at the same time contemptuous of everything of a material nature. I may say I was a much better man in reality than that odd creature which I endeavoured to represent, but even such as I pretended to be, the Nekhlyúdovs were fond of me and, to my good fortune, had, I think, no faith in my pretensions. Only Lyubóv Sergyéevna, who considered me as a great egotist, blasphemer, and cynic, I think, did not like me, and frequently quarrelled with me, grew angry, and tried to vanquish me with her fragmentary, inco-

herent phrases. But Dmítri remained in the same strange, more than friendly relations with her, and said that nobody understood her, and that she was doing him a great deal of good. His friendship for her continued to grieve the family as before.

Once Várenka, who was discussing with me that incomprehensible relation, explained it thus:

"Dmítri is egotistical. He is too proud, and, in spite of his good mind, is very fond of praise and admiration, and likes always to be first, while aunty, in the innocence of her soul, worships him, and has not enough tact to conceal that admiration for him, so that in reality she flatters him, only not feignedly, but sincerely."

This reflection impressed itself upon my memory, and when I later analyzed it, I could not help thinking that Várenka was a very clever girl, and, in consequence, with pleasure raised her in my opinion. As the result of the discovery of mind and other moral qualities in her, I frequently advanced her thus, with pleasure, but with a certain austere moderation, and never rose to ecstasy, which is the extreme point of this advancement. Thus, when Sófya Ivánovna, who never stopped talking about her niece, told me that Várenka, four years ago, while in the country, had without permission given away all her clothes and shoes to the village children, so that it was necessary to gather them up again, I did not at once accept the fact as worthy of advancing her in my opinion, but mentally made fun of her for such an impractical view of things.

When there were guests at the Nekhlyúdovs, among them sometimes Volódya and Dubkóv, I retreated, with self-satisfaction and with a certain calm consciousness of being a friend of the family, to the background, did not take part in the conversation, and only listened to what was said. And everything that others said seemed to me so incomprehensibly stupid that I wondered mentally how such a clever and logical woman as the princess, and

all her logical family, could listen to all those stupid things, and reply to them. If it had occurred to me then to compare with what the others said that which I said when I was alone, I, no doubt, should not have been surprised. Still less should I have been surprised if I had come to believe that our own family — Avdótya Vasílevna, Lyúbochka, and Kátenka — were just such women as the rest, by no means lower than others, and if I had recalled what it was Dubkóv, Kátenka, and Avdótya Vasílevna talked about for whole evenings, smiling merrily, and how, nearly every time, Dubkóv, stickling for something, read with feeling the verses, "*Au banquet de la vie, infortune convive,*" or extracts from the "Demon," and, in general, with what pleasure they uttered all kinds of nonsense for hours at a time.

Of course, when guests were present, Várenka paid less attention to me than when we were alone, and, besides, there was no reading, and no music, which I liked to hear so much. When she spoke to the guests she lost her chief charm for me,—her calm thoughtfulness and simplicity. I remember how strangely I was impressed by the conversation about the theatre and the weather, which she held with my brother Volódya. I knew that Volódya more than anything avoided and abhorred banality, and that Várenka also was in the habit of making fun of the quasi-entertaining conversations about the weather, and so forth; then why did they, upon meeting, eternally utter the most unbearable commonplaces, and as if ashamed of each other? After every conversation of this kind I was silently provoked with Várenka, and the following day made fun of the guests, and after that I found even more pleasure in being alone in the family circle of the Nekhlyúdovs.

However it may be, I began to derive more enjoyment from being with Dmítri in the drawing-room of his mother than from being all alone with him.

XLI.

MY FRIENDSHIP WITH NEKHLYÚDOV

At this period my friendship with Dmítri was suspended by a hair. I had begun long ago to pass judgment on him, in order to discover his faults; but in our first youth we love only passionately, and, therefore, we love only perfect men. But the moment the mist of passion begins to scatter, or the bright beams of reason begin involuntarily to burst through it, and we see the object of our passion in its real aspect, with its good and bad qualities, the bad qualities, like something unexpected, appear magnified and dazzle our eyes; the feeling of novelty and of hope that perfection in another man is possible encourages us not only to cool off toward, but even to turn away from, the former object of our passion; and we cast it off without regret, and rush forward to seek a new perfection. If the same thing did not happen in my relation to Dmítri, I owed it to his stubborn, pedantic, mental, rather than spiritual, attachment, which I should have felt ashamed to betray. In addition, we were united by our strange rule of frankness. When we parted from each other we were afraid to leave all the outrageous moral secrets of our confidences in the power of the other. However, our rule of frankness was evidently not always observed, and frequently embarrassed us, and produced strange relations between us.

Nearly every time when I called that winter on Dmítri, I found his classmate, Bezobyédov, with whom he studied.

Bezobyédov was a small, pockmarked, lean young man, with tiny, freckled hands, and very long, unkempt hair, always ragged, dirty, uncultured, and even a poor student. Dmítri's relations with him were as inscrutable to me as those with Lyubóv Sergyéevna. The only cause for his selecting him from among all his classmates and being friendly with him was that a worse-looking student could not be found in the whole university. Dmítri, no doubt, found a special delight in being friendly with him, in order to spite everybody. In all his relations with that student was expressed the haughty feeling, "It is all the same to me who you are, and I do not care for what others say; I like him, consequently he is all right."

I marvelled how he could constrain himself so much, and how unfortunate Bezobyédov was able to endure his awkward situation. I was very much displeased with that friendship.

I once called on Dmítri in the evening, in order to spend the time with him in his mother's drawing-room, to chat, and to listen to Várenka's singing and reading. Bezobyédov was up-stairs. Dmítri answered me in an abrupt voice that he could not go down, because, as I could see, he had a guest.

"What pleasure is there in it, anyway?" he added. "Let us sit here, and have a chat."

Although I was not at all delighted by the idea of staying two hours with Bezobyédov, I could not make up my mind to go down by myself into the drawing-room, and, inwardly provoked by my friend's odd ties, sat down in a rocking-chair, and began to rock. I was very angry with Dmítri and Bezobyédov for depriving me of the pleasure of being down-stairs; I waited, hoping that Bezobyédov would soon leave, and was irritated at him and Dmítri, and listened in silence to their conversation.

"A very agreeable guest! Stay with him!" I thought, when a lackey brought tea, and Dmítri had to ask Bezo-

byédov five times to take a glass, because his timid guest regarded it as his duty to decline the first and second glass, saying, "Drink yourself!" Dmítri had evidently to force himself to entertain his guest with a conversation, into which he vainly tried to drag me. I kept sullen silence.

"What's to be done? I have such a countenance that no one would dare imagine I am suffering ennui." I mentally turned to Dmítri, evenly rocking in my chair, in silence. I began, with a certain pleasure, to fan in myself an ever increasing feeling of quiet hatred for my friend. "What a fool," I thought of him; "he might have passed an agreeable evening with his charming relatives, — no, he must stay here with that beast, and now the time is passing, and it will be too late to go to the drawing-room," and I glanced at my friend past the edge of my chair. His hand, his attitude, his neck, and especially the back of his cranium and his knees seemed to me so disgusting and provoking, that I should have experienced a certain pleasure if at that moment I had said something very rude to him.

Finally Bezobyédov rose, but Dmítri would not let his agreeable guest depart at once: he proposed to him to stay overnight, but, fortunately, Bezobyédov declined, and went away.

Having taken him to the door, Dmítri returned and, softly smiling a self-satisfied smile and rubbing his hands, — no doubt, because he had sustained his character and because he was at last free from ennui, — began to pace the room, looking at me from time to time. He appeared still more disgusting to me. "How dare he walk and smile?" I thought.

"What makes you so sullen?" he said, suddenly, stopping opposite me.

"I am not at all sullen," I answered, as people always answer under these circumstances, "I am only annoyed

because you dissemble, before me, before Bezobyédov, and before yourself."

"What nonsense! I never dissemble before anybody."

"I am not forgetful of our rule of frankness, — I am telling you the truth. I am convinced," I said, "that this Bezobyédov is as unbearable to you as to me, for he is stupid, and God knows what, but you only put on airs before him."

"No! And, in the first place, Bezobyédov is a fine fellow — "

"But I say, yes. And I tell you that your friendship with Lyubóv Sergyéevna is also based on the fact that she regards you as a god."

"But I tell you, no."

"And I say, yes, because I know it from my own experience," I answered him, with the ardour of restrained annoyance, and trying to disarm him with my frankness. "I have told you so before, and I repeat it now, that it always seems to me that I love those people who tell me agreeable things, but when I examine myself closely, I find that there is no real attachment."

"No," continued Dmítri, correcting his necktie with an angry jerk of his neck, "when I love, neither praises nor chiding are able to change my feeling."

"It is not so. I have told you that when papa called me a good-for-nothing, I for some time hated him and wished his death; even thus you — "

"Speak for yourself. I am sorry if you are such — "

"On the contrary," I cried, jumping up from my chair, and with desperate boldness looking into his eyes, "what you say is wrong; did you not tell me about brother? — I do not understand you in this, because it would be dishonest, — did you not tell me? — and I will tell you, since I now understand you — "

In my attempt to sting him more painfully than he had stung me, I began to prove to him that he loved nobody,

and to reproach him for everything for which I thought I had a right to blame him. I was very much satisfied at having told him all, and forgot that the only possible purpose of this reproach was to make him confess the faults of which I accused him, and that this aim could not be reached at that particular moment when he was excited. I never told him these things when he was calm and might have confessed his shortcomings.

Our discussion was growing into a quarrel, when Dmítri suddenly became silent, and went into another room. I followed him, continuing to speak, but he did not answer me. I knew that in the column of his vices was also irritability, and that he was now trying to overcome it. I cursed all his rules.

This, then, is what our rule to tell each other everything we felt, and never to tell a third person about it, had led us to! In our transports of frankness we frequently made most disgraceful confessions to each other, and, to our shame, interpreted suppositions and dreams as desires and sensations, just as had happened in this particular case. These confessions not only did not strengthen the bond which united us, but dried up that very feeling, and disunited us; and now his egotism suddenly prevented him from making the simplest kind of confession, and in the heat of the discussion we made use of the very weapons which we had given one another, and which struck us painfully.

XLII

OUR STEPMOTHER

ALTHOUGH papa had intended to come to Moscow with his wife after New Year's, he arrived in October, when hunting with dogs was still in full swing. Papa said that he had changed his mind because his case was to be taken up in the Senate; but Mimi told us that Avdótya Vasílevna suffered such ennui in the country, and so often spoke of Moscow, and pretended to be ill, that papa decided to fulfil her wish. "Because she never loved him, and only tired everybody talking of her love, when she really only wished to marry a rich man," added Mimi, drawing a pensive sigh, as if to say: "Certain people would have acted quite differently, if he had only known how to appreciate them."

Certain people were unjust to Avdótya Vasílevna; her love for papa, a passionate, loyal love of self-sacrifice, was visible in every word, look, and motion of hers. But this love did not in the least interfere, aside from her desire not to be separated from the husband she worshipped, with her wanting an extraordinary bonnet from Madame Annete, a hat with an unusual, blue ostrich feather, and a dress of blue Venetian velvet, which would artistically display her stately bosom and arms, that no one but her husband and maids had seen heretofore. Kátenka was naturally on the side of her mother, while between us and our stepmother strange, jocular relations were established from the very first day of her arrival.

The moment she stepped out of the carriage, Volódya, with a solemn face and dim eyes, scuffing and curtseying, walked up to her hand, and said, as if introducing some one:

"I have the honour of welcoming my dear mother, and kissing her hand."

"Oh, dear son!" said Avdótya Vasílevna, smiling her beautiful, monotonous smile.

"And do not forget your second son," I said, also walking up to her hand, and involuntarily assuming Volódya's expression and voice.

If our stepmother and we had been sure of mutual attachment, this expression might have signified a disregard of demonstrative tokens of love; if we had been before hostilely inclined toward each other, it might have signified irony, or contempt of dissembling, or a desire to conceal from father our real relations, and many other sentiments and thoughts; but in the present case, this expression, which exactly fitted Avdótya Vasílevna's disposition, meant absolutely nothing, and only concealed an absence of all relations. I have often noticed since, in other families, just such jocular, false relations, whenever their members have a presentiment that the true relations would not be in place; precisely these relations subsisted between us and Avdótya Vasílevna. We hardly ever came out of them; we were always dissemblingly polite to her, spoke French, scuffed, and called her "*Chère maman*," to which she always replied with jokes of the same character, and with her beautiful, monotonous smile. Blubbering Lyúbochka alone, with her bandy legs and silly conversations, took a liking to our stepmother, and very naïvely, and at times awkwardly, endeavoured to bring us all together; and thus Lyúbochka was the only person in the whole world for whom Avdótya Vasílevna had a drop of attachment outside of her passionate love for papa. Avdótya Vasílevna showed for her an ecstatic

admiration and timid respect, which amazed us very much.

In the beginning Avdótya Vasílevna was fond of calling herself stepmother and hinting how badly and unjustly children and home people always looked upon a stepmother, and how difficult her position was in consequence. Although she well knew the disagreeableness of this position, she did nothing to avoid it, — by fondling one, giving some gift to another, and keeping her temper, — which would have been a very easy thing for her to do, because she was not exacting by nature, and was very good at heart. She not only did not do so, but, on the contrary, foreseeing her disagreeable state, she prepared for defence without being attacked; and, suspecting that all the people of the house wanted to be in every way rude and insulting to her, she saw a purpose in everything, and regarded it as most dignified to suffer in silence; and, of course, by not inviting love with her inaction, invited only enmity. Besides, she was so entirely devoid of the faculty of "understanding," of which I have spoken before, and which was highly developed in our house, and her habits were so different from those which had taken deep root with us, that this alone went against her.

In our punctual and neat home she lived as though she had just arrived, rose and retired now late, now early, and came to dinner and supper irregularly. When there were no guests she walked about half-dressed, and was not ashamed to appear before us and the servants in her petticoat, with a shawl about her, leaving her arms bare. At first I liked this simplicity, but very soon I lost, on account of this very simplicity, the last respect which I had for her. Stranger still for us was the fact that there were two women in her, according as there were guests or not: before guests, she was a young, healthy, and cold beauty, superbly dressed, not stupid, not clever, but

mirthful; without guests, she was an oldish, haggard, repining woman, slatternly, and suffering ennui, though loving. Frequently, when I saw how she, smiling and flushed from the wintry cold, happy in the consciousness of her beauty, returned from visits, and, taking off her hat, walked up to the mirror to examine herself in it; or how she, rustling her superb low-cut ball-dress, ashamed and at the same time proud before her servants, walked to her carriage; or how she, at home, when we had some little evening parties, dressed in a high-necked silk dress, with fine laces about her delicate neck, showered on all sides her monotonous, but beautiful smile, I thought, what would those say who admired her if they saw her as I did, when she stayed at home in the evening, waiting till after twelve o'clock for her husband's return from the club, and in some capote, with unkempt hair, walked like a shadow through the dimly lighted rooms? She would walk up to the piano, and play, frowning with her effort, the only waltz which she knew; or take up a novel and, having read a few sentences in the middle, throw it away again; or, in order not to wake the people, walk up to the buffet and take out from it a cucumber and some cold veal, and eat it, standing at the window of the buffet; or again, tired and gloomy, aimlessly walk from one room to another.

Nothing disunited us so much as the absence of understanding, which found its expression more particularly in a characteristic manner of condescending attention, whenever we spoke about things unintelligible to her. She was not to be blamed for acquiring an unconscious habit of slightly smiling with her lips only, and nodding, whenever she was told things that little interested her (nothing interested her but herself and her husband); but this smile and nod, frequently repeated, were unbearably detestable. Her merriment, too, as though mocking herself, us, and the whole world, was also awkward and did

not communicate itself to others; and her sentimentality was truly nauseating. The main thing was that she did not blush to tell everybody continually of her love for papa. Though she did not tell an untruth when she asserted that all her life consisted in her love for her husband, and though she proved it by her whole life, this unabashed, uninterrupted repetition about her love was, according to our ideas, detestable, and we were even more ashamed for her when she told it to strangers, than when she made mistakes in speaking French.

She loved her husband more than anything else in the world, and her husband loved her, especially in the beginning, when he saw that she pleased others as well. The only aim of her life was to get the love of her husband; but she seemed purposely to be doing everything which might displease him, with the aim in view of showing him all the power of her love and her readiness for self-sacrifice.

She was fond of fine dresses, and father liked to see her a belle in society, so as to provoke praises and admiration; she sacrificed her passion for fine garments for father, and more and more accustomed herself to stay at home in a gray blouse. Papa, who regarded freedom and equality as necessary conditions in family relations, had hoped that his favourite Lyúbochka and his good young wife would become intimate and friendly; but Avdótya Vasílevna sacrificed herself, and thought it necessary to show an improper respect to the real hostess of the house, as she called Lyúbochka, which painfully offended papa. He played a great deal that winter, finally lost much, and, anxious, as ever, not to mix up his gambling with his domestic affairs, concealed all his gaming from his home people. Aydótya Vasílevna sacrificed herself, and though frequently ill, and even pregnant at the end of winter, considered it her duty, in her gray blouse, with unkempt hair, though it were four or five o'clock in the

morning, to totter along in order to meet papa, when he, frequently tired, having sustained losses, shamefaced, after an eighth fine, returned from his club. She asked him abstractedly whether he had been lucky at the game, and she listened with condescending attention, smiling and nodding, to what he told her about his doings in the club, and to his hundredth entreaty not to wait for him. And although my father's gains and losses, on which, such was his game, his wealth depended, did not in the least interest her, she continued to be the first to meet him, every time when he returned from his club. In truth, she was urged on to these meetings not only by her passion for self-sacrifice, but by a secret jealousy, from which she suffered to an extraordinary degree. Nobody in the world could have convinced her that papa was returning so late from his club, and not from an amour. She tried to read in papa's face his amatory secrets, and not making out anything, she sighed, with a certain pleasurableness of grief, and gave herself over to the contemplation of her misfortune.

On account of these, and many other, continuous sacrifices, in papa's relations with his wife, there became noticeable, in the last months of that winter, when he lost a great deal, and therefore was generally out of sorts, an intermediate feeling of quiet hatred, — that reserved detestation of the object of attachment, which expresses itself in an unconscious tendency to offer all kinds of petty, moral annoyances to that object.

XLIII.

NEW COMPANIONS

THE winter passed unnoticed and it began to thaw, and in the university the schedule of examinations was already nailed to the wall, when I suddenly recalled that I had to pass examinations in eighteen subjects which I had taken, but of which I had neither heard, nor noted down, nor prepared a single one. It is strange such a plain question as how to pass my examinations had never occurred to me. I lived all that winter in such a mist, which was occasioned by my enjoyment of being a grown man and *comme il faut*, that when such a question as the examinations did occur to me, I compared myself with my companions, and thought, "They will go to the examinations, and most of them are not yet *comme il faut*, consequently I have an advantage over them, and certainly shall pass my examinations." I attended my lectures only because I got used to doing so, and because papa told me to go. And then, I had many acquaintances, and I often had a jolly time at the university. I loved that noise, that conversation, that laughter of the lecture-rooms; loved during the lectures, while occupying a back seat, at the even sound of the professor's voice, to dream of something, and to observe my companions; loved sometimes to run down to Matern to take a drink of brandy and a bite of something, and, though I knew the professors might afterward get after me for it, timidly to open the creaking door, and enter the lecture-room; loved to take part in some practi-

cal joke, when the different courses pressed against each other in the corridor. All that was very jolly.

When everybody began to attend lectures more regularly, and the professor of physics finished his course and bade us good-bye until the examinations, and the students collected their note-books and started to study in groups, I, too, thought I ought to prepare myself. Óperov, with whom I continued to exchange greetings, but with whom I was otherwise on a very distant footing, offered me, as I mentioned before, his note-books, and even proposed that I should come with other students to prepare the examinations together with him. I thanked him and consented, hoping by honouring him thus to wipe out our old misunderstanding, but insisted that all the students should come to my house, because I had pleasant quarters.

I was told that we should prepare, by turns, now at one house, now at another, wherever it was most convenient as to distance. The first time we met at the house of Zúkhin. It was a small room with a partition, in a large house on Trubnóy Boulevard. I was late that first day, and arrived when they had begun to read. The small room was filled with smoke from the strongest kind of tobacco, which Zúkhin smoked. On the table stood a decanter with brandy, a wine-glass, bread, salt, and a leg of mutton.

Zúkhin did not get up, but invited me to have a drink, and take off my coat.

"I suppose you are not used to such a reception," he added.

They all had on dirty chintz shirts and fronts. Trying not to express my contempt for them, I took off my coat, and lay down on the sofa, in an unconventional fashion. Zúkhin was reading, occasionally consulting his note-books; others stopped him and asked him questions which he answered briefly, cleverly, and precisely. I listened, and asked him a question, since there was much which I did not understand, not knowing what preceded.

"My friend, there is no use listening if you do not know this," said Zúkhin. "I will give you the note-books, you study it up for to-morrow; there will otherwise be no use explaining to you." I felt ashamed of my ignorance, and, at the same time being conscious of the justice of Zúkhin's remarks, I quit listening, and busied myself with observing my new companions. According to my classification into people *comme il faut*, and people not *comme il faut*, they obviously belonged to the second division, and, consequently, aroused in me not only the feeling of contempt, but also a certain personal hatred which I experienced toward them, because, not being *comme il faut*, they seemed to regard me merely as their equal, and even to treat me in a condescending, though kindly manner. This feeling was provoked in me by their feet, their dirty hands with their bitten nails, by Óperov's long nail on his little finger, by their rose-coloured shirts, their fronts, their swearing, which they jestingly directed at each other, the dirty room, Zúkhin's habit of frequently clearing his nose by pressing his finger against one nostril, and especially by their manner of pronouncing, using, and accentuating certain words. For example, they used the word "insensate" for "foolish," "precisely" for "just," "superb" for "all right," and so forth, which seemed to me bookish and detestably improper. I was still more provoked to hatred by their accentuation of some Russian, and especially foreign, words.

In spite of their repulsive exterior, which at that time I was unable to overlook, I felt that there was something good in these people, and, envying the jolly comradery which united them, was drawn to these students, and wished to become better acquainted with them, however hard it was for me to do so. I already knew gentle, honest Óperov; now, I took a special liking for quick, extremely clever Zúkhin, who evidently was a leader in this circle. He was a small, thick-set man of dark com-

plexion, with a somewhat swollen and always shining, but exceedingly intelligent, lively, and independent countenance. This expression he owed mainly to a low, but arched forehead over deep-set black eyes, bristly short hair, and a thick black beard, which always looked unshaven. He did not seem to be thinking about himself (which always pleased me in people), and it was evident that his brain was never idle. He had one of those expressive faces which suddenly change in your opinion a few hours after you have seen them for the first time. This happened, in my opinion, with Zúkhin's face toward the end of that evening. Suddenly new wrinkles appeared in his face, his eyes retreated farther, his smile became different, and his whole countenance was so changed that it was hard to recognize him.

When the reading was over, Zúkhin, the other students, and I drank a glass of brandy, and the decanter was almost empty. Zúkhin asked who had a quarter, so that he could send the old woman, who waited on him, for some more brandy. I offered him my money, but Zúkhin turned to Óperov, as though he had not heard me, and Óperov took out his beaded purse, and gave him the required coin.

"Look out and don't drink too much," said Óperov, who did not drink himself.

"Don't be afraid," answered Zúkhin, sucking the marrow out of the bone of mutton (I remember how I thought that it was his eating so much marrow that made him so clever). "Don't be afraid," continued Zúkhin, smiling slightly, and his smile was usually such that you had to notice it, and thank him for it. "Though I may drink a bit, it will not harm me; now, my friend, we shall see who will beat whom, he me, or I him. It is all fixed, my friend," he added, boastingly snapping his fingers against his brow. "Now, I am afraid Seménov will flunk; he has been drinking hard."

So it happened: that very Seménov with the gray hair, who had so much pleased me at the first examination because he looked worse than I, and who, after having passed his entrance examinations second on the list, had in the first month of his student life regularly attended his lectures, toward the end did not appear at all at the university, having gone on a spree long before reviewing time.

"Where is he?" somebody asked.

"I have lost sight of him," continued Zúkhin. "Last time we smashed 'Lisbon' together. It was a superb affair. Then, they say, there was something or other — He has a great head! There is a lot of fire in that man! A lot of brain! It will be a pity if he goes to the dogs. And he will, no doubt. He is not the kind of a lad, with his impulses, to hold out at the university."

After a short chat, they went away, having first agreed to meet the following days at Zúkhin's, as his room was centrally located. When they went out, I felt embarrassed because they all walked, and I had a vehicle, so I timidly proposed to Óperov to take him home. Zúkhin had followed us out, and, having borrowed a rouble of Óperov, went away somewhere to pass the whole night. On our way, Óperov told me a great deal about Zúkhin's character and manner of life. When I returned home I could not fall asleep for a long time, as I pondered about these my new acquaintances. I long wavered between respect for them, to which their knowledge, their simplicity, honesty, and poetry of youth, and careless bravery led me, and revulsion, produced by their indecent exterior. In spite of my best wishes, it was at that time literally impossible for me to get on a close footing with them. Our conceptions were quite different. There was an abyss of shades which for me constituted the whole charm and meaning of life, but which was quite incomprehensible to them, and *vice versa*. But the chief cause which made it impossible

for us to get nearer to each other lay in the twenty-rouble cloth of my coat, my vehicle, and fine linen shirts. This cause was particularly important for me; it seemed to me that I involuntarily offended them with the signs of my wealth. I felt guilty before them, and, now humbling myself, now feeling provoked for my undeserved humility, and again passing to self-confidence, was entirely unable to enter into equal, sincere relations with them. The coarse and depraved side of Zúkhin's character was at this time drowned for me in that powerful poetry of daring, of which I felt he was possessed, so that it did not affect me unpleasantly.

I went nearly every evening for two weeks to Zúkhin's to study. I studied very little, however, because, as I have already remarked, I was too far behind my classmates. I did not have enough strength of character to study by myself in order to catch up with them, and thus only pretended I was listening and understanding what they were reading. I thought my companions guessed I was feigning, and I frequently noticed that they left out passages which they knew, and never asked me about them.

With every day I more and more excused the irregularities of that circle, entering more into its life, and finding more poetry in it. The word of honour, which I had given to Dmítri that I would never go out carousing with them, kept me back in my desire to share their pleasures.

Once I tried to boast to them of my knowledge of literature, particularly French, and led up the conversation to it. To my astonishment I found that, although they pronounced the foreign titles in Russian, they had read a great deal more than I, and that they knew and appreciated the English, and even Spanish, authors, and Le Sage, whose names even I had never heard. Púshkin and Zhukóvski were literature to them, and not, as to me, books in yellow bindings, which I had read and learned when a child. They despised Dumas, Sue, and Féval alike, and they all, espe-

cially Zúkhin, judged literature much better and clearer than I, a fact which I could not help acknowledging.

Nor did I have any advantage over them in the knowledge of music. To my still greater astonishment, Óperov played the violin, another student who came there played the cello and the piano, and both played in the university orchestra, knew music well, and appreciated what was good. In short, everything of which I wanted to boast before them, except my pronunciation of French and German, they knew better than I, and were not in the least proud of it. I might have bragged of my knowledge of the world, but I was not possessed of it like Volódya. Then, what was that height from which I looked down upon them? My acquaintance with Prince Iván Ivánovich? My pronunciation of French? My linen shirt? My nails? But were not all these mere trifles? It sometimes occurred to me dimly, under the influence of the feeling of envy which I had in that company and of the good-hearted merriment which I observed. They all spoke "thou" to each other. The simplicity of their address frequently reached coarseness, but even under that coarse exterior could be noticed a constant fear of offending one another. "Rascal," "pig," which they employed as words of endearment, were irksome to me, and gave me cause for making fun of them inwardly; but these words did not offend them, and did not prevent their being on a very friendly and intimate footing. In their relations with each other they were as careful and refined as only very poor and very young people can be. The main thing was, I felt a broad, daring sweep in Zúkhin's character, and in his exploits in "Lisbon." I imagined that these carousals were something quite different from that hypocrisy with the burnt rum and champagne, in which I had taken part at the house of Baron Z——.

XLIV.

ZÚKHIN AND SEMÉNOV

I DO not know to what condition of life Zúkhin belonged, but I know that he had been a Gymnasiast at S——, was without any means, and, it seems, was not of the gentry. He was then about eighteen years of age, though he looked much older. He was uncommonly clever, but especially quick-witted: it was easier for him at once to grasp a whole, complicated subject, to foresee all its details and deductions, than consciously to judge the laws by which these deductions were arrived at. He knew he was clever, was proud of it, and, on account of this pride, was equally simple in his relations with everybody, and kind-hearted. He had, no doubt, experienced much in life. His impassioned, receptive nature had had time to receive the impress of love, friendship, affairs, and money matters. Though in a small way, and only in the lower strata of society, there was not a thing for which, if he had experienced it, he did not have something like contempt, or indifference and inattention, which originated in the great facility with which everything came to him. He seemed to take up with ardour everything new, only in order to scorn it the moment he had attained his end, — and his apt nature always attained its ends, and the right to scorn them.

The same was true of his sciences: though he did not study much, nor take down notes, he knew mathematics excellently, and it was not an idle boast when he said he would beat his professor. He considered many of the

lectures the merest nonsense, but with the unconscious practical temporizing which was inherent in his nature, he easily fell in with the professors, and they liked him. He was brusque in his relations with the authorities, but the authorities respected him. He had no regard nor love for the sciences, and even had contempt for those who seriously strove to acquire what came to him so easily. The sciences, as he understood them, did not occupy one-tenth of his faculties; life as a student did not offer him anything to which he could devote himself entirely; and his impassioned, active nature, as he himself said, demanded life, and he gave himself up to carousing, according to his means, with ardour and with the desire to wear himself out completely. Just before the examinations, Óperov's prediction came true. He disappeared for two weeks, and we had to study at the house of another student. But at the first examination he appeared in the hall, pale, emaciated, with trembling hands, and was brilliantly promoted to the second course.

In the beginning of the year there were some eight men in the band of carousers, of which Zúkhin was the leader. Among their number were at first Ikónin and Seménov, but Ikónin withdrew from the company, being unable to stand all the reckless orgies to which they abandoned themselves in the beginning of the year, and Seménov withdrew, because it was not enough for him. In the beginning everybody in our course looked with terror at them, and told each other their exploits.

The chief heroes of these exploits were Zúkhin, and toward the end of the year, Seménov. Seménov finally was looked upon with a certain terror, and when he made his appearance at a lecture, which was rather rarely, the whole lecture-room was agitated.

Seménov ended his carousing activities immediately before the examinations in a most energetic and original manner, and I was a witness to it, thanks to my acquaint-

ance with Zúkhin. It happened like this. One evening, when we had just come together at Zúkhin's, and Óperov, having placed near himself one candle in a candlestick and another in a bottle, had lowered his head and begun to read in his thin voice his finely written note-books of physics, the landlady entered the room and announced to Zúkhin that somebody had brought a note for him —

XLV.

I FLUNKED

At last came the first examination, in differential and integral calculus, while I was still living in a strange mist, and was not clearly conscious of what was awaiting me. In the evenings, when I returned from my visits to Zúkhin's company, I was haunted by the thought that I ought to modify my convictions, that there was something wrong in them; but in the morning, in the sunshine, I again became *comme il faut*, was satisfied with it, and did not desire any changes.

I was in such a frame of mind when I arrived at my first examination. I sat down on the bench where princes, counts, and barons sat, began to converse with them in French, and, however strange it may seem, it did not even occur to me that very soon I should have to answer questions in a subject I knew nothing about. I looked calmly at all who went up to be examined, and even permitted myself to make fun of some of them.

"Well, Grap," I said to Ilínka, when he returned from the table, "are you scared?"

"We shall see how you will do," said Ilínka, who had revolted against my influence, ever since he had entered the university, did not smile when I spoke to him, and was ill disposed toward me.

I smiled contemptuously at Ilínka's answer, although the doubt which he had expressed frightened me for a moment. But a mist again shrouded that feeling, and I

continued to be absent-minded and indifferent, so that I promised Baron Z—— to go and lunch with him at Matern's as soon as I should be examined, as though that were the merest trifle for me. When I was called out together with Ikónin, I straightened out the skirts of my uniform, and in the coldest blood walked up to the examination table.

A light chill of terror ran down my back only when the young professor, the same that had examined me at the entrance examination, looked straight at me, and I touched the paper on which the tickets were written. Ikónin, who picked up a ticket with the same swagger as he had done at the previous examinations, answered a thing or two, though badly; but I did what he had done at his first examinations — even worse, for I took a second ticket, and did not answer even that. The professor looked pitifully at me, and in a quiet, but firm voice said:

"You will not pass to the second course, Mr. Irténev. You had better not try the other examinations. The department has to be cleaned up. And you, too, Mr. Ikónin," he added.

Ikónin asked permission to be reëxamined, as a special favour, but the professor answered him that he would not be able to do in two days what he had not done in the course of a year, and that he would pass under no conditions. Ikónin begged him again, piteously and humbly, but the professor declined again.

"You may go, gentlemen," he said, in the same loud, but firm voice.

Not until then did I decide to leave the table, and I felt ashamed because I had with my silent presence, as it were, taken part in Ikónin's humiliating prayers. I do not remember how I crossed the hall past the students, what I answered to their questions, how I walked out into the vestibule, and how I reached home! I was aggrieved and humiliated, — I was truly wretched.

For three days I did not leave my room, saw nobody, sought, as in my childhood, consolation in tears, and wept much. I looked for pistols with which to shoot myself, if I should make up my mind to do so. I thought Ilínka Grap would spit in my face upon meeting me, and that he would be right in doing so; that Óperov rejoiced at my misfortune and told everybody of it; that Kolpikóv was quite right when he insulted me at Yar's; that my stupid speeches with Princess Kornákov could have had no other results, and so forth. All the oppressive moments of my life, so tormenting to my egoism, passed, one after another, through my mind; I tried to accuse some one in particular of my misfortune; thought that somebody had done it on purpose; concocted a whole intrigue against myself; murmured against the professors, against my classmates, against Volódya, against Dmítri, and against papa for having sent me to the university; murmured against Providence for having permitted me to live to such a disgrace. Finally, feeling that I was completely undone in the eyes of all those who knew me, I asked father to let me become a hussar, or go to the Caucasus. Papa was dissatisfied with me, but, seeing my terrible grief, consoled me, saying that, however bad it was, it might be mended by my going over into another department. Volódya, too, who did not see anything terrible in my misfortune, said that in another department I should at least not have to be ashamed before my new classmates.

Our ladies did not understand at all, and did not wish, or were not able, to understand what an examination was, what it meant to be promoted, and were sorry for me only because they saw my grief. Dmítri came to see me every day, and was all the time very kind and considerate of me, but I thought that for that very reason he had cooled off to me. It always pained and mortified me when he came up-stairs and silently seated himself near me, with

something of the expression with which a physician sits down on the bed of a dangerously sick man. Sófya Ivánovna and Várenka sent me through him some books which I had desired to have, and wanted me to come to see them; but in this very attention I saw a haughty, offensive condescension for a man who had fallen very low. Three or four days later I calmed down a little, but did not leave the house until the day of our departure to the country, and continued to walk aimlessly from one room to another, all the time brooding over my sorrow, and trying to evade all the people of the house.

I thought and thought, and finally, late one evening, when I was down-stairs all alone, and listening to Avdótya Vasílevna's waltz, I suddenly jumped up, ran up-stairs, fetched the note-book on which was written "Rules of Life," opened it, and was overcome by repentance and moral impulse. I burst out into tears, but no longer tears of repentance. Having regained my composure, I determined again to write down the rules of life, and I was convinced that I would never again do anything wrong, would never pass an idle moment, and never be false to my rules.

I shall tell in the next, happier half of my youth, whether this moral impulse lasted long, in what it consisted, and what new principles it furnished for my moral development.

THE INCURSION

Story of a Volunteer

1852

THE INCURSION

Story of a Volunteer

I.

On the 12th of July Captain Khlópov walked in through the low door of my earth-hut, wearing his epaulets and sabre, in which uniform I had not seen him since my arrival in the Caucasus.

"I am directly from the colonel," he said, answering the interrogative glance with which I met him; "to-morrow our battalion will start."

"Whither?" I asked.

"To N——. The troops are to rendezvous there."

"And from there, I suppose, they will go into action?"

"No doubt."

"Where? What do you think?"

"Think? I tell you what I know. Last night a Tartar came galloping from the general,—he brought an order for the battalion to move and take two days' rations of hardtack along. But where, why, how long, my friend, that we do not ask; we are told to go, and that is enough."

"But if you only take two days' rations of hardtack, the troops will not be held there longer, it seems."

"Well, that does not mean anything yet —"

"How so?" I asked, in astonishment.

"Just so! When they went to Dárgi they took hard-tack for a week, and stayed almost a month."

"Shall I be allowed to go with you?" I asked, after a moment's silence.

"I suppose there will be no objection, but my advice is not to go. What is the use risking —"

"No, you must permit me not to take your advice; I have been living a whole month here only to get a chance to see an action, — and you want me to miss it."

"All right, go; only, really, do you not think you had better stay? You might wait for us here, and go out hunting in the meantime; and we should go with God's aid. It would be fine!" he said, in such a persuasive tone that in the first moment it really appeared to me to be fine; but I said with firmness that I would not stay for anything.

"What is it you have not seen there?" the captain continued to persuade me. "Do you want to find out what battles are like? Read Mikháylovski-Danilévski's 'Description of War;' it is a fine book: he describes there in detail where every corps is put, and how the battle takes place."

"On the contrary, that does not interest me," I answered.

"Well, then what? You just want to see, I suppose, how people are killed? Now, in 1832 there was a certain gentleman here. I think he was a Spaniard. He took part in two expeditions with us, wearing some kind of a blue uniform; the lad was killed. You can't astonish anybody here, my friend."

However annoyed I was because the captain so badly interpreted my intention, I did not attempt to disillusion him.

"Was he a brave fellow?" I asked him.

"God knows! He insisted on riding in the van; wherever there was an engagement he was sure to be."

"Then he was brave," I said.

"No, it does not mean bravery to push yourself forward where you are not wanted —"

"What do you call bravery?"

"Bravery? bravery?" repeated the captain, with the mien of a man to whom such a question is put for the first time. "Brave is he who acts as is proper," he said, after a moment's thought.

I recalled that Plato defined bravery as the knowledge of what one ought to fear and what not, and, in spite of the generality and obscurity in the captain's definition, I considered that the fundamental thought of both was not so different as might appear, and that the definition of the captain was even more correct than that of the Greek philosopher, because if he could have expressed himself like Plato, he no doubt would have said that he is brave who is afraid only of what one ought to be afraid of, and not of that which one should not fear.

I wanted to explain my idea to the captain.

"Yes," he said, "it seems to me that in every danger there is a choice, and the choice made, for example, under the influence of the feeling of duty is bravery, and the choice made under the influence of a base feeling is cowardice; therefore, a man cannot be called brave who risks his life out of vanity, or curiosity or greed; on the other hand, a man cannot be called a coward who declines a danger under the influence of an honest feeling of domestic obligation or simply from conviction."

The captain looked at me with a strange expression all the time I was speaking.

"I do not know how to prove that to you," he said, filling his pipe, "but we have here a lieutenant who likes to philosophize. You talk with him. He writes poetry, too."

I had become acquainted with the captain in the Caucasus, but had known of him before in Russia. His

mother, Márya Ivánovna Khlópov, a small landed proprietress, was living two versts from my estate. I had been at her house before my departure for the Caucasus. The old woman was very happy to hear that I should see her Páshenka (so she called the gray-haired old captain), and, being a living epistle, should be able to tell him about her life and transmit a package to him. Having treated me to excellent pastry and goose-meat, Márya Ivánovna went into her sleeping-room and returned with a black, fairly large amulet, to which was attached a black silk ribbon.

"This is Our Mother, the Protectress of the Burning Bush," she said, making the sign of the cross and kissing the image of the Holy Virgin, and handed it over to me. "Do me the favour, my dear sir, and try to get it to him. You see, when he went to the Caucasus I had mass celebrated, and made a vow I would order this image of the Holy Virgin, if he should be hale and unharmed. The Protectress and the holy saints have preserved him these eighteen years: he has not been wounded once, and yet he has been in all kinds of battles! As Mikháylo, who has been with him, told me, it is enough to make one's hair stand on end, you know. All I know of him is from strangers: he, my dove, does not write a word to me about his expeditions, — he is afraid he would frighten me."

Only in the Caucasus I learned, but not from the captain, that he had been severely wounded four times, and naturally he had written nothing to his mother about the expeditions, no more than about the wounds.

"So let him wear this holy image," she continued. "I bless him with it. The All-holy Protectress will defend him! Particularly in battles let him always have it on. Just tell him, sir, that his mother orders him to do so."

I promised to transmit her exact message.

"I know you will like him, my Páshenka," the old

woman continued. "He is just a fine fellow! Will you believe it, not a year passes without his sending me some money, and he helps liberally my daughter, Annushka; and all that comes out of his salary! I truly praise the Lord all my life," she concluded, with tears in her eyes, "for having given me such a child."

"Does he write you often?" I asked.

"But rarely, my dear sir: about once a year, and then only when he sends the money, so he adds a word, and sometimes not. 'If,' says he, 'I do not write you, mother, you know I am well and alive; and if anything should happen, the Lord prevent it, they will let you know without me.'"

When I gave the captain his mother's present (that happened in my quarters), he asked for a piece of wrapping-paper, carefully wrapped it, and put it away. I told him a good deal about the details of his mother's life: the captain was silent. When I was through, he went into the corner, and was uncommonly long in filling his pipe.

"Yes, a fine old woman!" he said from there, in a somewhat dull voice, "I wonder whether God will let me see her once more."

In these simple words were expressed very much love and sorrow.

"Why do you serve here?" I said.

"I have to serve," he answered with conviction. "You know double pay means a great deal for a poor fellow like me."

The captain lived frugally; he did not play cards, rarely caroused, and smoked common tobacco, which he, no one knew why, called "Sambrotalik" tobacco. I had taken a liking to the captain ere this: he had one of those simple, quiet Russian countenances, into the eyes of which it is pleasant and easy to look straight; but after this chat I felt a genuine respect for him.

II.

AT four o'clock in the morning, on the following day, the captain came after me. He was dressed in an old, worn-out coat without epaulets, Lezgian broad pantaloons, a white fur cap, with its hair turned yellow and uncurling, and an unsightly Asiatic sabre over his shoulder. The white pony on which he rode walked with drooping head, in a slow amble, and continually switching his scanty tail. Though the figure of the good captain was not very soldierly, and was even unattractive, there was expressed in it so much indifference to everything surrounding him, that it inspired involuntary respect.

I did not keep him waiting even a minute, immediately mounted my horse, and we rode out together beyond the gate of the fortress.

The battalion was some fifteen hundred feet ahead of us, and appeared a black, solid, waving mass. One could guess that it was infantry from the fact that the bayonets could be seen like a forest of long needles, and now and then we heard the sounds of a soldier song, of the drum, and of the superb tenor of the singer of Company Six, which I had greatly enjoyed in the fortress. The road lay through the middle of a deep and broad ravine, along the bank of a small river, which at that time was "playing," that is, overrunning its banks. Flocks of wild pigeons circled near it; they now alighted on the stony bank, now, turning around in the air, and making large circles, disappeared from sight. The sun was not yet to be seen, but the higher places on the right of the ravine

were beginning to be illuminated. The gray and whitish rocks, the yellowish green moss, the dew-drenched bushes of the holly, the medlar, and the buckthorn were defined with extraordinary clearness and relief in the transparent golden light of the east; but the other side, and the hollow, which was covered with a dense mist that wavered in smoky, uneven layers, were damp and gloomy, and represented an indefinable mixture of colours, pale violet, almost black, dark green, and white. Right in front of us, against the deep azure of the horizon, were seen with striking clearness the glaringly white, dull masses of the snow-capped mountains, with their fantastic, but minutely exquisite, shadows and contours. Crickets, grasshoppers, and thousands of other insects were awake in the tall grass, and filled the air with their sharp, uninterrupted sounds: it seemed as though an endless number of the tiniest bells were jingling in your ears. The air was redolent with the water, the grass, and the mist — in short, redolent with an early, beautiful summer morning. The captain struck fire, and lighted his pipe; the odour of the Sambrotalik tobacco and the tinder seemed unusually pleasant to me.

We rode at the side of the road, in order to catch up with the infantry as quickly as possible. The captain seemed more pensive than usual, did not let his Daghestan pipe for a moment out of his mouth, and at every step urged on with his heels his pony, which, waddling from side to side, made a barely perceptible, dark green track over the tall, damp grass. From under his very feet a pheasant flew up, with its peculiar call, and with that noise of the wing which makes a hunter tremble with involuntary excitement, and slowly rose in the air. The captain did not pay the least attention to it.

We caught up with the battalion, when behind us was heard the tramp of a galloping horse, and immediately a handsome, youthful man, in the coat of an officer and a

tall fur cap, passed by us. When he lined up with us, he smiled, nodded to the captain, and swung his whip — I had time only to observe that he sat in his saddle and held the bridle with extreme grace, and that he had beautiful black eyes, a delicate nose, and a barely sprouting moustache. I was particularly pleased with his smile when he saw us admiring him. From this smile alone I could judge that he was very young.

"Where does he gallop to?" mumbled the captain, with a dissatisfied countenance, without taking the pipe out of his mouth.

"Who is he?" I asked him.

"Ensign Alánin, a subaltern of my company, — he came last month only from the military school."

"I suppose he is going for the first time into action," I said.

"That's what makes him so awfully happy!" answered the captain, thoughtfully shaking his head. "Oh, youth!"

"But why should he not be happy? I know that for a young officer that must be very interesting."

The captain was silent for two or three minutes.

"That's why I say, Oh, youth!" he continued in a bass voice. "It is easy enough to be happy before having seen anything! You don't feel quite so happy after a few expeditions. There are now some twenty officers in this expedition; somebody or other is going to be killed, or wounded, so much is certain. To-day I, to-morrow he, day after to-morrow somebody else, — then why not be happy?"

III.

THE bright sun had scarcely issued from behind a mountain, and begun to light up the valley over which we were marching, when the billowing clouds of mist were dispersed, and it grew warm. The soldiers, with their guns and sacks upon their shoulders, were marching slowly on the dusty road; in the ranks could be heard from time to time Little-Russian conversation, and laughter. A few old soldiers, in linen blouses, — mostly sergeants, — walked, smoking, at one side of the road, and carried on a sober conversation. Three-horse carts, laden to the top, moved in slow step, and raised a dense, immovable cloud of dust. The officers rode on horseback in front: some, as they say in the Caucasus, *dzhigitted*, that is, striking their horses with their whips, made them take four or five leaps, after which they checked them abruptly, and made them turn their heads back; others were interested in the singers, who, in spite of the oppressive heat, gave one song after another, without interruption.

About two hundred yards in front of the infantry, rode on a large white horse a tall and handsome officer in an Asiatic dress, surrounded by Tartars on horseback; he was known in the regiment as a desperately brave fellow and as one who would blurt out the truth to a man's face, whoever he might be. He was dressed in a black Tartar half-coat with galloons, similar leggings, new, tightly fitting shoes with trimmings, a yellow mantle, and a tall fur cap poised on the back of his head. On his breast and back were silver galloons, to which were attached the cartridge-

pouch in front, and a pistol behind; another pistol and a poniard set in silver hung down from his belt. Above all this he was girded with a sabre in a red morocco leather sheath, and over his shoulder was slung a musket in a black case.

From his dress, poise, carriage, and, in general, from all his movements, it was evident that he tried to look like a Tartar. He even spoke in a language that I did not know to the Tartars who were riding with him; but from the perplexed and derisive glances which they cast at each other, I concluded that they did not understand him either. He was one of our young officers, dzhigit-braves, who form their ideas from Marlínski and Lérmontov. These people look upon the Caucasus only through the prism of the "Heroes of Our Time," of Múlla-Nur, and so forth, and in all their actions are guided not by their own inclinations, but by the example of these heroes.

The lieutenant may have been fond of the society of refined women and distinguished men, — generals, colonels, adjutants, — I am even convinced that he was very fond of this society, because he was exceeding vain, but he considered it his absolute duty to turn out his rough side to all distinguished people, though he was but moderately impertinent to them; and when a lady appeared in the fortress, he regarded it as his duty to pass under her window with his chums, dressed in nothing but a red shirt and his shoes on his bare feet, and to cry and curse at the top of his voice, not so much in order to insult her as to show her what beautiful white feet he had, and how it would be possible to fall in love with him if he wanted it.

Or, he would frequently go in the night with two or three peaceable Tartars into the mountains, in order to lie in ambush for and kill hostile Tartars, although his heart told him more than once that there was no bravery in that; he regarded it as his duty to make people suffer

in whom he pretended to be disappointed, or whom he thought he had to scorn or hate. He never took off two things from his body: a large image which hung from his neck, and a poniard above his shirt, with which he even lay down to sleep. He was sincerely convinced that he had enemies. It was his greatest delight to persuade himself that he had to wreak vengeance on somebody and wash out an insult with blood. He was convinced that hatred, vengeance, and contempt for the human race were the most elevated, most poetical of sentiments. But his mistress, a Circassian woman, of course, whom I had occasion to meet, told me that he was a very kind and mild man, and that every evening he wrote his gloomy memoirs, cast his accounts on lined paper, and, kneeling, prayed to God.

How much he had suffered in order to appear to himself what he had set out to be, because his companions and the soldiers could not understand him as he wished! Once, during his nightly expeditions on the road with his chums, he happened to wound a hostile Chechén with a bullet in the leg, and to take him prisoner. This Chechén afterward lived for seven weeks with the lieutenant, and the lieutenant took care of him and attended to him, as if he were his nearest friend, and when he was cured, the lieutenant sent him away with gifts. Afterward, the lieutenant happened during an expedition to have wandered away from the cordon; while he was returning the fire of the enemy, he heard some one call him by name, and his wounded Tartar friend rode out and invited the lieutenant with signs to do the same. The lieutenant rode up to his friend, and shook hands with him. The mountaineers stood aloof, and did not shoot; but the moment the lieutenant wheeled his horse around, a few men shot at him, and one bullet grazed him below the spine. Upon another occasion I saw, at night, a conflagration in the fortress, and two companies of soldiers were trying to put it out. In the crowd,

which was illuminated by the blood-red glare of the fire, suddenly appeared a tall figure on a jet-black horse. The figure pushed the crowd aside, and rode up to the very fire. When the lieutenant came close to it, he leaped from his horse and rushed into the house that was burning in one corner. Five minutes later the lieutenant came out from it with singed hair and a burn on his elbow, carrying in his bosom two young doves which he had saved from the fire.

His name was Rosenkranz; he frequently spoke of his genealogy, in some way or other deducing it from the Varengians, and proved conclusively that he and his ancestors had been pure Russians.

IV.

THE sun had passed half of its journey, and cast its hot rays across the heated air upon the parched earth. The dark blue sky was entirely clear; only the bases of the snow-capped mountains were beginning to be clothed in pale violet clouds. The motionless air seemed to be filled with a transparent dust; it grew intolerably hot. Having reached a small stream, which crossed the road, the army halted. The soldiers stacked their arms, and plunged into the brook; the commander of the battalion sat down in the shade on a drum, and, expressing in his full face the degree of his rank, was getting ready to lunch with several of the officers; the captain lay down in the grass under the company's cart; brave Lieutenant Rosenkranz and a few younger officers spread out their felt mantles, and, seating themselves upon them, began to carouse, as could be seen from the display of flagons and bottles all about them, and from the extraordinary animation of the singers who stood before them in a semicircle, and in a piping voice imitated a Lezgian girl singing a Caucasian dancing-song:

"Shamil started a rebellion
In the years gone by —
Tray-ray, ra-ta-tay —
In the years gone by."

Among the number of these officers was also the youthful ensign who had caught up with us in the morning. He was very funny: his eyes were sparkling, his tongue

was a little heavy; he wanted to kiss everybody, and make love to them. Poor boy! He did not know that he might appear ridiculous by such actions; that his frankness and tenderness, with which he annoyed the others, would lead the others, not to love him, which he was striving for, but to ridicule him; nor did he know that when he, heated up, at last threw himself down on the mantle and, leaning on his arm, threw back his thick black hair, he was uncommonly handsome.

Two officers were seated under a cart and played "Old Maid" on a hamper.

I listened with curiosity to the conversations of the soldiers and officers, and attentively watched the expression of their faces, but not in one of them was I able to observe even a shadow of that restlessness which I myself was experiencing: the jokes, the laughter, and the stories expressed a general carelessness and indifference to the impending danger, as though it would be preposterous to suppose that some of them would never return along this road!

V.

AFTER six o'clock in the evening we entered, dusty and tired, through the broad, fortified gate of Fort N——. The sun was setting and cast its slanting, rose-coloured rays on the picturesque little batteries and on the gardens with their tall poplars, which surrounded the fort, on the ripening fields, and on the white clouds which, crowding together near the snow-capped mountains, as if to imitate them, formed a not less fantastic and beautiful chain. A young half-moon was visible in the horizon, resembling a transparent cloud. In the village which nestled near the gate, a Tartar on the roof of a hut was calling the faithful to prayer. The singers burst forth with new abandonment and energy.

After resting and making my toilet I went to an adjutant who was an acquaintance of mine, and asked him to report my intentions to the general. On my way from the suburb where I lodged, I noticed something in the fortress which I had least expected. A fine-looking, two-seated carriage, in which I saw a fashionable bonnet and heard a French conversation, passed by me. From the open window of the commandant's house were borne the sounds of a "Lízanka" or "Kátenka" polka, played on a wretched piano, out of tune. A few scribes were sitting, with cigarettes in their hands, over glasses of wine, in the inn by which I had just passed, and I heard one telling the other: "Now, permit me, when it comes to politics, Márya Grigórevna is a first-class lady." A Jew with

stooping shoulders and sickly countenance, dressed in a threadbare coat, dragged along a squeaking, broken hand-organ, and over the whole suburb were borne the sounds of the finale from "Lucia." Two women, in rustling garments, wrapped in silk kerchiefs, and with brightly coloured parasols in their hands, sailed by me on the board sidewalk. Two maidens, one in a pink, the other in a blue dress, with bare heads, stood near the mound of a small house, and burst out in a forced, subdued laugh, with the evident purpose of attracting the attention of the officers who passed by. The officers, in new coats, white gloves, and shining epaulets, paraded in the streets and in the boulevard.

I found my acquaintance in the lower story of the general's house. I had just explained my wish to him, and he had told me that it was very likely it would be fulfilled, — when the fine carriage, which I had noticed at the entrance, rumbled by the window where we were sitting. A tall, stately gentleman in the uniform of the infantry, with the epaulets of a major, came out of the carriage, and went up to the general.

"Oh, pardon me, if you please," said the adjutant to me, rising from his seat, "I must announce him to the general."

"Who is it that has arrived?" I asked him.

"The countess," he answered, and buttoning up his uniform, rushed up-stairs.

A few minutes later, a rather small, but very handsome man, with a white cross in his buttonhole, came out of the entrance. He was followed by the major, the adjutant, and two other officers. In the gait, the voice, and all the movements of the general could be seen a man who was well aware of his high importance.

"*Bonsoir, Madame la Comtesse,*" he said, putting his hand through the carriage window.

A little hand in a dogskin glove pressed his hand, and

a pretty, smiling face in a yellow bonnet appeared in the window.

Of the whole conversation, which lasted several minutes, I heard only, as I passed, the general say, smiling:

"*Vous savez, que j'ai fait vœu de combattre les infidèles, prenez donc garde de le devenir.*"

Laughter was heard in the carriage.

"*Adieu donc, cher général!*"

"*Non, à revoir,*" said the general, walking up the steps, "*n'oubliez pas, que je m'invite pour la soirée de demain.*"

The carriage rattled away.

"Here is a man," I thought, returning home, "who has everything a Russian strives for: rank, wealth, distinction, — and this man, before the battle, of which only God knows the outcome, is jesting with a pretty woman, and promising her to take tea with her on the morrow, as though he had just met her at a ball!"

At this adjutant's I met a man who surprised me even more: it was a young lieutenant of K—— Regiment, who was distinguished for his almost feminine gentleness and timidity, and who had come to the adjutant to pour out his anger and annoyance upon the people who, he thought, had intrigued against him so as to keep him from an appointment in the impending action. He said it was contemptible to act thus, that it was not at all friendly to act so, that he would remember him, and so forth. However much I watched the expression of his face, however much I listened to the sound of his voice, I could not help convincing myself that he was not dissembling in the least, but was really provoked and aggrieved because he was not allowed to go to shoot Circassians and expose himself to their fire; he was as aggrieved as is a child who is unjustly whipped. I was absolutely unable to understand the thing.

VI.

THE army was to move at ten o'clock in the evening. At half-past eight I mounted my horse, and rode to the general's house; but surmising that he and his adjutant were busy, I stopped in the street, tied my horse to a fence, and sat down on a mound, expecting to overtake the general as soon as he should ride out.

The glare and heat of the sun had given way to the coolness of the night and to the dim light of the young moon, which was beginning to set, forming about itself a pale, semicircular halo against the deep azure of the starry heavens; lights appeared in the windows of houses and in the chinks of the shutters in the earth-huts. The stately poplars of the gardens, which were visible against the horizon beyond the whitewashed, moonlit earth-huts with their reed-thatched roofs, seemed taller and blacker.

The long shadows of the houses, the trees, and the fences fell picturesquely on the illuminated, dusty road. The frogs dinned[1] incessantly in the river; in the streets were heard, now hasty steps and conversation, now the galloping of a horse; from the suburb now and then the sound of a hand-organ reached me; now it was "The winds are blowing," now some "Aurora-Walzer."

I will not tell what I was pondering over; in the first place, I should be ashamed to confess the gloomy thoughts that oppressed my soul with obtrusive alternation, while all about me I saw nothing but mirth and joy; and, in

[1] The sound of the frogs in the Caucasus has nothing in common with the croaking of Russian frogs. — *Author's Note.*

the second place, because that does not fit into my story. I was so merged in meditation that I did not even notice the bell striking eleven, and the general passing by me with all his suite.

The rear-guard was still in the gate of the fortress. I made my way with difficulty over the bridge, that was crowded with cannon, caissons, company wagons, and officers noisily giving their orders. After leaving the gate, I galloped beyond the army that silently moved in the darkness, nearly a verst in extent, and overtook the general. As I passed by the artillery, with their ordnance in single file, and the officers riding between the ordnance, my ear was struck, amidst a silent and solemn harmony, by the offensive dissonance of a German voice, calling, "Satan, hand me the linstock!" and the voice of a soldier, hurriedly crying, "Shevchénko, the lieutenant is asking for some fire!"

The greater part of the sky was covered with long, dark gray thunder-clouds; only here and there stars shone dimly between them. The moon was hidden behind the near horizon of the black mountains, which were to be seen on the right, and cast a weak, quivering half-light against their summits, which sharply contrasted with the impenetrable darkness that covered their bases. The air was warm and so calm that not a blade of grass, not a cloud seemed to be in motion. It was so dark that it was impossible to tell objects at very close range; along the road I imagined now rocks, now animals, now some strange people, and I discovered them to be bushes when I heard their rustling, or felt the freshness of the dew with which they were covered. Before me I saw a dense, undulating, black wall, behind which followed a few moving spots; those were the vanguard of the cavalry, and the general with his suite. About us moved just such a gloomy mass, but it was lower than the first; it was the infantry.

In the whole detachment reigned such quiet that all the harmonious sounds of the night, full of mysterious charm, were clearly audible; the distant, moaning howl of the jackals, resembling now a wail of despair, now a burst of laughter; the sonorous, monotonous songs of the crickets, the frogs, and the quails; a roar which was ever coming nearer, and the cause of which I was unable to explain to myself; and all those nocturnal, barely audible movements of Nature, which it is impossible to comprehend, or to define, ran together into one full, beautiful sound which we call the stillness of the night. This stillness was broken, or, more correctly, coincided with the dull tramp of the hoofs, and the rustling of the tall grass, which were produced by the slowly moving detachment.

Now and then was heard the clang of a heavy ordnance, the sound of clashing bayonets, stifled conversation, and the snorting of a horse.

Nature breathed pacifyingly in beauty and strength.

Is this beautiful world, with its immeasurable starry heaven, too small for people to live together in peace? Can the feeling of malice, vengeance, or the passion for annihilating his kind survive in the soul of man, amidst this entrancing Nature? Everything evil in the heart of man, it seems, ought to vanish in his contact with Nature, — that immediate expression of beauty and goodness.

VII.

We had been riding more than two hours. I was getting chilled and drowsy. In the darkness I dimly discerned the same indistinct objects: at a certain distance a black wall, and just such moving spots; right close to me the crupper of a white horse which switched its tail and widely spread its hind legs: a back in a white mantle, on which could be seen a rifle in a black cover, and the white handle of a pistol in a hand-made case; the fire of a cigarette, lighting up a red moustache; a beaver collar, and a hand in a chamois-leather glove. I bent down to the neck of the horse, closed my eyes, and forgot myself for a few minutes; then, I was suddenly struck by the familiar tramping and rustling: I looked round,— and it seemed to me that I stood in one spot, and that the black wall which was in front was moving up to me, or that the wall had stopped, and I was just about to ride into it. In one such moment I was still more struck by an approaching uninterrupted din, the cause of which I could not make out: it was the roar of water. We were entering a deep ravine, and approaching a mountain torrent which was then at its highest. The roar grew louder; the damp grass became thicker and taller; bushes were more frequent; and the horizon grew by degrees narrower. Now and then bright fires flashed in various places in the gloomy background of the mountains, and immediately disappeared again.

"Please tell me what kind of fires these are!" I said in a whisper to a Tartar who was riding at my side.

"Don't you know?" he answered.

"No."

"It is mountain-grass tied to a post and put on fire."

"What is that for?"

"That everybody should know that the Russians have come. Now," he added, laughing, "there will be a terrible hubbub in the villages, everybody will be taking all his possessions to some deep valley."

"Do they already know in the mountains that the army is coming?" I asked him.

"Oh, how can they help knowing? They always know: that is the way with our people!"

"So Shamil is now getting ready for the expedition?" I asked.

"No," he answered, shaking his head, in denial. "Shamil will not be in the expedition: he will send a superior officer, and himself will be up there, looking through a glass."

"Does he live far from here?"

"No. On the left, about ten versts from here."

"How do you know?" I asked. "Have you been there?"

"Yes. We have all been in the mountains."

"And have you seen Shamil?"

"No, we cannot see Shamil. One hundred, three hundred, a thousand guards are all about him. Shamil is in the middle!" he said, with an expression of servile admiration.

Looking up, one could see that it was dawning in the east in the clear heaven, and the Pleiades were low on the horizon; but in the ravine, through which we passed, it was damp and gloomy.

Suddenly, a little ahead of us, several fires were lighted in the darkness; at the same moment bullets whizzed by with a whining sound, and amidst the surrounding silence resounded reports of guns, and a loud, penetrating cry.

Those were the advance pickets of the enemy. The Tartars who composed them shouted, discharged their guns at random, and ran away.

Everything was silent again. The general called up the interpreter. A Tartar in a white mantle rode up and spoke to him for quite awhile, in a whisper, and gesticulating.

"Colonel Khasánov! Order the cordon to be scattered," said the general, in a quiet, drawling, but distinct voice.

The detachment walked up to the river, the black mountains of the cleft were behind us; day began to dawn. The vault of heaven, on which pale, indistinct stars were barely visible, seemed higher; the morning star began to shine brightly in the east; a fresh, chill breeze blew from the west, and a light, steam-like mist rose over the roaring river.

VIII.

THE guide pointed out a ford, and the van of the cavalry, and immediately afterward the general, with his suite, began to cross over. The water was up to the horses' breasts and rushed down with extraordinary force between white boulders, which in places could be seen at the surface of the water, and formed foaming, hissing streams about the legs of the horses. The horses were surprised at the roar of the water, raised their heads, and pricked their ears, but walked evenly and cautiously against the current over the broken bottom. The riders raised their feet and weapons. The foot-soldiers, literally in their shirts, raising above the water their guns, over which were slung bundles containing their wearing apparel, and holding each other's hands, twenty at a time, with evident effort, as was seen in their strained faces, tried to stem the current. The artillery riders drove their horses in a trot into the water, with a shout. The cannon and the green caissons, across which the water washed now and then, rang out against the stony bottom; but the good Cossack horses tugged together at their traces, made the water foam, and with wet tails and manes climbed the opposite bank.

The moment the crossing was accomplished, the general suddenly looked pensive and serious, wheeled his horse about, and started in a trot with the infantry over the broad, wood-girt clearing which opened up before us. A cordon of Cossack horsemen was scattered along the edge of the forest.

In the woods was seen a footman in mantle and fur cap; then a second, a third. Some one of the officers called out, "These are Tartars!" Then a puff of smoke appeared from behind a tree — a shot, another. Our frequent fusilade drowned that of the enemy. Only now and then a bullet flying by with a slow sound, resembling that made by a bee in its flight, proved that not all the shots were ours. Now the infantry with hurried step and the ordnance at a trot passed into the cordon; there were heard the booming discharges of the cannon, the metallic sound of case-shot, the hissing of rockets, the cracking of guns. The cavalry, infantry, and artillery were seen on all sides in the extensive clearing. The smoke of the cannon, rockets, and muskets intermingled with the dew-covered verdure and the mist. Colonel Khasánov galloped up to the general, and abruptly checked his horse at full speed.

"Your Excellency!" he exclaimed, raising his hand to his cap, "order the cavalry to advance! The pennons[1] have appeared," and he pointed with his whip to the Tartar horsemen, in front of whom rode two men on white horses, with red and blue rags on sticks.

"Very well, Iván Mikháylovich!" said the general.

The colonel turned his horse on the spot, unsheathed his sabre, and shouted, "Hurrah!"

"Hurrah! Hurrah! Hurrah!" it rang out in the ranks, and the cavalry flew after them.

Everybody watched with curiosity; there was a pennon, another, a third, a fourth —

The enemy did not wait for the attack, but concealed himself in the forest, and opened a musketry fire from there. The bullets flew more frequently.

"*Quel charmant coup d'œil!*" said the general, lightly

[1] The pennons have, among the mountaineers, almost the same value as flags, except that every brave may make and display his own pennon. — *Author's Note.*

rising, in English fashion, on his black, slender-legged horse.

"*Charmant!*" answered the major, pronouncing his *r* gutturally, and, striking his horse with his whip, rode up to the general. "*C'est un vrai plaisir, que la guerre dans un aussi beau pays,*" he said.

"*Et surtout en bonne compagnie,*" added the general, with a pleasant smile.

The major bowed.

Just then a cannon-ball from the enemy flew by with a rapid, disagreeable hiss, and struck against something. Behind me was heard the groan of a wounded man. This groan impressed me so strangely that the warlike picture lost all its charm for me in a flash. No one but me seemed to have noticed it. The major laughed, with greater enthusiasm, it seemed; another officer calmly repeated the unfinished words of his sentence; the general looked in the opposite direction, and with the calmest smile said something in French.

"Do you order the return of their fire?" asked the commander of the artillery, galloping up.

"Yes, scare them a little," carelessly said the general, lighting his cigar.

The battery took its position, and the cannonade began. The earth groaned from the discharges of the guns; fires kept on flashing, and the smoke, through which one could hardly distinguish the attendants moving near their guns, dimmed the eyes.

The village was taken. Colonel Khasánov again rode up to the general, and, having received his orders, galloped away into the village. The war-cry was raised once more, and the cavalry disappeared in the cloud of dust which it raised.

The spectacle was truly majestic. There was, however, one thing which entirely spoiled the impression for me, as a man who did not take any part in the action, and who

was unused to it: to me this motion, and animation, and the shouts seemed superfluous. Involuntarily the comparison occurred to me of a man who strikes the air with an axe from the shoulder.

IX.

THE village was occupied by our army, and not a single soul of the enemy was left in it, when the general rode up to it with his suite, with which I had mingled.

The long, neat huts, with their flat earth roofs and beautiful chimneys, were situated on uneven, rocky mounds, between which flowed a small brook. On one side were seen green gardens illuminated by the bright sunlight, with enormous pear-trees and plum-trees; on the other towered strange shadows, — tall, perpendicular stones of the cemetery, and long, wooden poles, with balls and many-coloured flags attached to their ends. These were the graves of the dzhigits.

The army stood drawn up beyond the gate.

A minute later the dragoons, the Cossacks, and the infantry with evident joy scattered over the crooked lanes, and the empty village suddenly became enlivened. In one place a thatch was battered down, an axe struck against the solid wood, and a board door was broken through; in another, a hayrick, a fence, a hut, were set on fire, and the dense smoke rose like a column in the clear atmosphere. Here a Cossack dragged along a bag of flour and a carpet; a soldier with a beaming face brought out of a hut a tin basin and some rag; another, stretching out his hands, was trying to catch a couple of hens that with loud cackling were fluttering against the fence; a third found somewhere a huge earthern pot with milk which he smashed on the ground with a loud laugh, after he had drunk his fill from it.

The battalion with which I had come from Fort N—— was also in the village. The captain was sitting on the roof of a hut, and puffing streams of Sambrotalik tobacco from his short pipe, with such an indifferent expression on his face that, when I saw him, I forgot that we were in a hostile village, and I imagined I was quite at home in it.

"Oh, you are here, too?" he said, noticing me.

The tall figure of Lieutenant Rosenkranz flashed, now here, now there, in the village; he was continually giving orders, and had the appearance of a man extremely worried about something. I saw him come out of a hut with a triumphant countenance; he was followed by two soldiers who were leading an old Tartar in fetters. The old man, whose whole attire consisted of a motley half-coat all in rags, and patched-up drawers, was so feeble that his bony hands, which were tightly fastened on his stooping back, barely seemed to be attached to his shoulders, and his crooked, bare feet moved with difficulty. His face and even a part of his shaven head were furrowed by deep wrinkles; his distorted, toothless mouth, surrounded by a closely cropped gray moustache and beard, moved incessantly as though chewing something; but in his red eyes, which were bereft of their lashes, still sparkled fire, and was clearly expressed an old man's indifference to life.

Rosenkranz asked him through an interpreter why he had not gone with the rest.

"Where should I go?" he said, calmly looking about him.

"Where the others have gone," remarked somebody.

"The dzhigits have gone to fight the Russians, but I am an old man."

"Are you not afraid of the Russians?"

"What will the Russians do to me? I am an old man," he said again, carelessly surveying the circle which had formed itself around him.

On my way back, I saw the same old man, without a

cap, with his hands tied, shaking behind the saddle of a Cossack of the line, and looking about him with the same apathetic expression. He was needed for the exchange of prisoners.

I climbed on the roof, and took a seat near the captain.

"It seems there were but few of the enemy," I said to him, wishing to learn his opinion of the past action.

"Enemy?" he repeated, with amazement. "Why, there were none. Do you call these the enemy? You wait for the evening when we retreat; you will see then what company we shall have! There will be enough of them!" he added, pointing with his pipe to the young forest which we had crossed in the morning.

"What is this?" I asked, anxiously, interrupting the captain, and pointing at a number of Don Cossacks collected a short distance from us.

We heard in their midst something resembling the cry of a baby, and the words:

"Oh, don't cut — stop — they will see us. Have you a knife, Evstignéich? Give me your knife."

"They are dividing up something, the scamps," calmly remarked the captain.

Just then the handsome ensign suddenly came running from around the corner, with a flushed and frightened face, and, waving his hands, flew at the Cossacks.

"Don't touch it, don't strike it!" he cried, in a child-like voice.

When the Cossacks saw the officer, they stepped aside and let a white little goat escape out of their hands. The young ensign was very much embarrassed, mumbled something, and stopped in front of us with a confused countenance. Noticing the captain and me on the roof, he blushed still more and ran trippingly up to us.

"I thought they were about to kill a baby," he said, smiling timidly.

X.

THE general had gone ahead with the cavalry. The battalion with which I had come from Fort N—— remained in the rear-guard. The companies of Captain Khlópov and Lieutenant Rosenkranz were retreating together.

The captain's prediction was completely verified: the moment we entered the narrow young forest which he had mentioned, mountaineers on horse and on foot continually flashed by us on both sides, and at so close a range that I clearly saw some of them, bending down, and, with musket in hand, running from one tree to another.

The captain took off his cap, and piously made the sign of the cross; some of the older soldiers did likewise. In the forest were heard the war-cry and the words: "Iay, Giaour! Iay Urus!" Dry, short musket reports followed one after another, and bullets whizzed on both sides. Ours answered silently with a running fire; in our ranks, occasionally, were heard remarks like these: "Where does he[1] shoot from? It is easy for him behind the trees! We ought to bring out the cannon," and so forth.

The ordnance was drawn out, and, after a few discharges of case-shot, the enemy seemed to weaken, but a moment later the fire, the shouts, and the war-cry increased with every step which our army was taking.

We had retreated less than six hundred yards from the village, when the cannon-balls of the enemy began to

[1] "He" is a collective name by which the soldiers in the Caucasus understand the enemy in general. — *Author's Note.*

whistle above us. I saw a soldier killed by a ball — but why tell the details of this terrible picture, when I myself would give much to forget it!

Lieutenant Rosenkranz himself fired off his musket, without stopping a minute to rest, in a hoarse voice gave orders to the soldiers, and at full speed galloped from one end of the cordon to the other. He was somewhat pale, and that was quite becoming to his martial countenance.

The handsome ensign was in ecstasy; his beautiful black eyes sparkled with daring; his mouth smiled lightly; he continually rode up to the captain and asked his permission to charge the enemy.

"We will drive them back," he said, persuasively, "really, we will."

"Not now," replied the captain, gently, "we must retreat!"

The captain's company occupied the edge of the forest and returned the fire of the enemy while lying down. The captain, in his threadbare coat and dishevelled cap, slackened the reins of his white pony, and, bending his feet in his short stirrups, stood silently in one spot. (The soldiers knew their business so well that there was no need of giving them orders.) Only now and then he raised his voice and called out to those who lifted their heads. The captain's figure was not very martial, but there was so much truthfulness and simplicity in his countenance that I was exceedingly impressed by it. "Here is a truly brave man," I said, involuntarily, to myself.

He was just as I always saw him: the same calm movements, the same even voice, the same expression of guilelessness on his homely but simple face; by his more than usually bright glance one could tell the attention of a man quietly occupied with his business. It is easy to say "just as always;" but how many different shades have I noticed in others! One wants to appear calmer, another

sterner, another gayer, than usual; but one could see by the captain's face that he did not even understand why one should dissemble.

The Frenchman who said at Waterloo, "*La garde meurt, mais ne se rend pas*," and other heroes, especially French heroes, who have made noteworthy utterances, were brave, and really *have* made noteworthy utterances; but between their bravery and that of the captain is this difference, that if, upon any occasion, a great word had actually stirred in the soul of my hero, I am convinced he would never have uttered it; first, because, having uttered this great word, he would have been afraid that it would spoil his great deed; and secondly, because when a man feels in himself the power to do a great deed, no saying of any kind is needed. This, in my opinion, is a peculiar and sublime feature of Russian bravery. How, then, can a Russian help being pained when he hears our young soldiers use trite French phrases, with their pretence of imitating an antiquated French chivalry?

Suddenly a scattered and subdued hurrah was heard in the direction where the handsome ensign stood with a detachment. Upon looking round, I saw some thirty soldiers, with muskets in their hands and sacks on their shoulders, with difficulty run over a newly ploughed field. They stumbled, but moved ahead and shouted. In front of them, with drawn sabre, galloped the young ensign.

They were all lost in the forest —

After a few minutes of shouting and crackling of muskets, the frightened horse ran out of the forest, and in the clearing appeared some soldiers carrying the dead and the wounded; among the latter was also the young ensign. Two soldiers supported him under his arms. He was pale as a sheet, and his handsome head, on which was visible only a shadow of that martial transport that had animated him but a minute ago, seemed peculiarly sunken between his shoulders, and fell down on his breast. On the white

shirt, beneath his unbuttoned coat, could be seen a small blood-stain.

"Oh, what a pity!" I said, involuntarily turning away from that sad spectacle.

"Of course, a pity," said an old soldier who, with gloomy face, stood near me, leaning on his gun. "He is afraid of nothing. How can one do so?" he added looking fixedly at the wounded man. "He is still foolish, so he is paying the penalty."

"And are you afraid?" I asked.

"Well, no!"

XI.

FOUR soldiers were carrying the ensign on a litter. Behind it a soldier from the suburb led a lean, foundered horse laden with two green boxes that contained the surgeon's instruments. They were waiting for the physician. The officers rode up to the litter and tried to encourage the wounded man.

"Well, brother Alánin, it will be some time before you dance again with the castagnettes," said Lieutenant Rosenkranz, who rode up, smiling.

He evidently thought that these words would sustain the courage of the handsome ensign; but, so far as one could judge by the cold and sad expression of the latter's countenance, they did not produce the desired effect.

The captain rode up, too. He looked steadily at the wounded lad, and on his ever indifferent and cold face was expressed genuine pity.

"Well, my dear Anatóli Iványch," he said, in a voice full of tender sympathy, such as I had not expected from him, "it was evidently God's will."

The wounded lad looked up; his pale face was lighted by a sad smile.

"Yes, I did not obey you."

"Say rather, it was God's will," repeated the captain.

The physician, who had in the meantime arrived, took from the assistant some bandages, a probe, and another implement, and, rolling up his sleeves, walked up to the wounded man with an encouraging smile.

"Well, I see they have made a little hole in your

healthy body," he said, in a jesting and careless tone; "show it to me!"

The ensign obeyed, but in the expression with which he glanced at the mirthful doctor were surprise and reproach, which the latter did not see. He began to probe the wound, and to examine it from all sides; but the wounded man lost his patience and with a heavy groan pushed away his hand.

"Leave me alone," he said, in a barely audible voice, "I shall die anyway."

With these words he fell on his back, and five minutes later, when I went up to the group that had formed itself near him, and asked a soldier, "How is the ensign?" he answered, "He is going!"

XII.

It was late when the detachment, drawn out in a broad column, approached the fortress with songs. The sun had disappeared behind the snow-covered mountain range, and was casting its last, rosy rays on a long, thin cloud which was hovering in the clear, transparent horizon. The snow-capped mountains were beginning to disappear in a lilac mist; only their upper contour was delineated with extraordinary clearness against the blood-red light of the sunset. The transparent moon, which had long been up, was growing white against the dark azure sky. The verdure of the grass and the trees looked black, and was covered with dew. The dark masses of the troops moved, with an even noise, across a luxuriant field; tambourines, drums, and merry songs were heard from all sides. The singer of Company Six sang out with all his might, and the sounds of the pure chest-notes of his tenor, full of sentiment and power, were borne afar through the transparent evening air.

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A MORNING OF A LANDED PROPRIETOR

1852

A MORNING OF A LANDED PROPRIETOR

Fragment from an Unfinished Novel, "A Russian Proprietor"

I.

PRINCE NEKHLYÚDOV was nineteen years old when he came from the Third Course of the university to pass his vacation on his estate, and remained there by himself all summer. In the autumn he wrote in his unformed childish hand to his aunt, Countess Byeloryétski, who, in his opinion, was his best friend and the most brilliant woman in the world. The letter was in French, and ran as follows:

"DEAR AUNTY: — I have made a resolution on which the fate of my whole life must depend. I will leave the university in order to devote myself to country life, because I feel that I was born for it. For God's sake, dear aunty, do not laugh at me! You will say that I am young; and, indeed, I may still be a child, but this does not prevent me from feeling what my calling is, and from wishing to do good, and loving it.

"As I have written you before, I found affairs in an indescribable disorder. Wishing to straighten them out, and to understand them, I discovered that the main evil

lay in the most pitiable, poverty-stricken condition of the peasants, and that the evil was such that it could be mended by labour and patience alone. If you could only see two of my peasants, Davýd and Iván, and the lives which they lead with their families, I am sure that the mere sight of these unfortunates would convince you more than all I might say to explain my intention to you.

"Is it not my sacred and direct duty to care for the welfare of these seven hundred men, for whom I shall be held responsible before God? Is it not a sin to abandon them to the arbitrariness of rude elders and managers, for plans of enjoyment and ambition? And why should I look in another sphere for opportunities of being useful and doing good, when such a noble, brilliant, and immediate duty is open to me?

"I feel myself capable of being a good landed proprietor; and, in order to be one, as I understand this word, one needs neither a university diploma, nor ranks, which you are so anxious I should obtain. Dear aunty, make no ambitious plans for me! Accustom yourself to the thought that I have chosen an entirely different path, which is, nevertheless, good, and which, I feel, will bring me happiness. I have thought much, very much, about my future duty, have written out rules for my actions, and, if God will only grant me life and strength, shall succeed in my undertaking.

"Do not show this letter to my brother Vásya. I am afraid of his ridicule; he is in the habit of directing me, and I of submitting to him. Ványa will understand my intention, even though he may not approve of it."

The countess answered with the following French letter:

"Your letter, dear Dmítri, proved nothing to me, except that you have a beautiful soul, which fact I have

never doubted. But, dear friend, our good qualities do us more harm in life than our bad ones. I will not tell you that you are committing a folly, and that your conduct mortifies me; I will try to influence you by arguments alone. Let us reason, my friend. You say that you feel a calling for country life, that you wish to make your peasants happy, and that you hope to be a good proprietor. (1) I must tell you that we feel a calling only after we have made a mistake in it; (2) that it is easier to make yourself happy than others; and (3) that in order to be a good proprietor, one must be a cold and severe man, which you will scarcely be, however much you may try to dissemble.

"You consider your reflections incontrovertible, and even accept them as rules of conduct; but at my age, my dear, we do not believe in reflections and rules, but only in experience; and experience tells me that your plans are childish. I am not far from fifty, and I have known many worthy people, but I have never heard of a young man of good family and of ability burying himself in the country, for the sake of doing good. You always wished to appear original, but your originality is nothing but superfluous self-love. And, my dear, you had better choose well-trodden paths! They lead more easily to success, and success, though you may not need it as success, is necessary in order to have the possibility of doing the good which you wish.

"The poverty of a few peasants is a necessary evil, or an evil which may be remedied without forgetting all your obligations to society, to your relatives, and to yourself. With your intellect, with your heart and love of virtue, there is not a career in which you would not obtain success; but at least choose one which would be worthy of you and would do you honour.

"I believe in your sincerity, when you say that you have no ambition; but you are deceiving yourself. Am-

bition is a virtue at your years and with your means; but it becomes a defect and a vulgarity, when a man is no longer able to satisfy that passion. You, too, will experience it, if you will not be false to your intention. Good-bye, dear Mítya! It seems to me that I love you even more for your insipid, but noble and magnanimous, plan. Do as you think best, but I confess I cannot agree with you."

Having received this letter, the young man long meditated over it; finally, having decided that even a brilliant woman may make mistakes, he petitioned for a discharge from the university, and for ever remained in the country.

II.

THE young proprietor, as he wrote to his aunt, had formed rules of action for his estate, and all his life and occupations were scheduled by hours, days, and months. Sunday was appointed for the reception of petitioners, domestic and manorial serfs, for the inspection of the farms of the needy peasants, and for the distribution of supplies with the consent of the Commune, which met every Sunday evening, and was to decide what aid each was to receive. More than a year passed in these occupations, and the young man was not entirely a novice, either in the practical or in the theoretical knowledge of farming.

It was a clear June Sunday when Nekhlyúdov, after drinking his coffee, and running through a chapter of "Maison Rustique," with a note-book and a package of bills in the pocket of his light overcoat, walked out of the large, columnated, and terraced country-house, in which he occupied a small room on the lower story, and directed his way, over the neglected, weed-grown paths of the old English garden, to the village that was situated on both sides of the highway. Nekhlyúdov was a tall, slender young man with long, thick, wavy, auburn hair, with a bright sparkle in his black eyes, with red cheeks, and ruby lips over which the first down of youth was just appearing. In all his movements and in his gait were to be seen strength, energy, and the good-natured self-satisfaction of youth. The peasants were returning in variegated crowds from church; old men, girls, children,

women with their suckling babes, in gala attire, were scattering to their huts, bowing low to their master, and making a circuit around him. When Nekhlyúdov reached the street, he stopped, drew his note-book from his pocket, and on the last page, which was covered with a childish handwriting, read several peasant names, with notes. "Iván Churís asked for fork posts," he read, and, proceeding in the street, walked up to the gate of the second hut on the right.

Churís's dwelling consisted of a half-rotten log square, musty at the corners, bending to one side, and so sunken in the ground that one broken, red, sliding window, with its battered shutter, and another smaller window, stopped up with a bundle of flax, were to be seen right over the dung-heap. A plank vestibule, with a decayed threshold and low door; another smaller square, more rickety and lower than the vestibule; a gate, and a wicker shed clung to the main hut. All that had at one time been covered by one uneven thatch; but now the black, rotting straw hung only over the eaves, so that in places the framework and the rafters could be seen. In front of the yard was a well, with a dilapidated box, with a remnant of a post and wheel, and a dirty puddle made by the tramping of the cattle, in which some ducks were splashing. Near the well stood two ancient, cracked, and broken willows, with scanty, pale green leaves. Under one of these willows, which witnessed to the fact that at some time in the past some one had tried to beautify the spot, sat an eight-year-old blonde little maiden, with another two-year-old girl crawling on the ground. A pup, which was wagging his tail near them, ran headlong under the gate, the moment he noticed the master, and from there burst into a frightened, quivering bark.

"Is Iván at home?" asked Nekhlyúdov.

The older girl was almost petrified at this question, and was opening her eyes wider and wider, but did not

answer; the smaller one opened her mouth, and was getting ready to cry. A small old woman, in a torn checkered dress, girded low with an old, reddish belt, looked from behind the door, but did not answer. Nekhlyúdov walked up to the vestibule, and repeated his question.

"At home, benefactor," said the old woman, in a quivering voice, bowing low, and agitated with terror.

When Nekhlyúdov greeted her, and passed through the vestibule into the narrow yard, the old woman put her hand to her chin, walked up to the door, and, without turning her eyes away from the master, began slowly to shake her head.

The yard looked wretched. Here and there lay old blackened manure that had not been removed; on the manure-heap lay carelessly a musty block, a fork, and two harrows. The sheds about the yard, under which stood, on one side, a plough and a cart without a wheel, and lay a mass of empty, useless beehives in confusion, were nearly all unthatched, and one side had fallen in, so that the girders no longer rested on the fork posts, but on the manure.

Churís, striking with the edge and head of his axe, was trying to remove a wicker fence which the roof had crushed. Iván Churís was a man about fifty years of age. He was below the average height. The features of his tanned, oblong face, encased in an auburn beard with streaks of gray, and thick hair of the same colour, were fair and expressive. His dark blue, half-shut eyes shone with intelligence and careless good nature. A small, regular mouth, sharply defined under a scanty blond moustache, expressed, whenever he smiled, calm self-confidence and a certain derisive indifference to his surroundings. From the coarseness of his skin, deep wrinkles, sharply defined veins on his neck, face, and hands, from his unnatural stoop, and crooked, arch-like

legs, it could be seen that all his life had passed in extremely hard labour, which was beyond his strength. His attire consisted of white hempen drawers, with blue patches over his knees, and a similar dirty shirt, which was threadbare on his back and arms. The shirt was girded low by a thin ribbon, from which hung a brass key.

"God aid you!" said the master, entering the yard.

Churís looked around him, and again took up his work. After an energetic effort he straightened out the wicker work from under the shed; then only he struck the axe into a block, pulled his shirt in shape, and walked into the middle of the yard.

"I wish you a pleasant holiday, your Grace!" he said, making a low obeisance, and shaking his hair.

"Thank you, my dear. I just came to look at your farm," said Nekhlyúdov, with childish friendliness and embarrassment, examining the peasant's garb. "Let me see for what you need the fork posts that you asked of me at the meeting of the Commune."

"The forks? Why, your Grace, you know what forks are for. I just wanted to give a little support to it, — you may see for yourself. Only a few days ago a corner fell in, and by God's kindness there were no animals in it at the time. It barely hangs together," said Churís, contemptuously surveying his unthatched, crooked, and dilapidated sheds. "When it comes to that, there is not a decent girder, rafter, or box case in them. Where am I to get the timber? You know that yourself."

"Then why do you ask for five forks when one shed is all fallen in, and the others soon will fall? What you need is not forks, but rafters, girders, posts, — all new ones," said the master, obviously parading his familiarity with the subject.

Churís was silent.

"What you need, therefore, is timber and not forks. You ought to have said so."

"Of course, I need that, but where am I to get it? It won't do to go for everything to the manor. What kind of peasants should we be if we were permitted to go to the manor to ask your Grace for everything? But if you will permit me to take the oak posts that are lying uselessly in the threshing-floor of the manor," he said, bowing, and resting now on one foot, now on the other, "I might manage, by changing some, and cutting down others, to fix something with that old material."

"With the old material? But you say yourself that everything of yours is old and rotten. To-day one corner is falling in, to-morrow another, and day after to-morrow a third. So, if you are to do anything about it, you had better put in everything new, or else your labour will be lost. Tell me, what is your opinion? Can your buildings last through the winter, or not?"

"Who knows?"

"No, what do you think? Will they fall in, or not?"

Churís meditated for a moment.

"It will all fall in," he said, suddenly.

"Well, you see, you ought to have said at the meeting that you have to get the whole property mended, and not that you need a few forks. I am only too glad to aid you."

"We are very well satisfied with your favour," answered Churís, incredulously, without looking at the master. "If you would only favour me with four logs and the forks, I might manage it myself; and whatever useless timber I shall take out, might be used for supports in the hut."

"Is your hut in a bad condition, too?"

"My wife and I are expecting every moment to be crushed," Churís answered, with indifference. "Lately a strut from the ceiling struck down my old woman."

"What? Struck down?"

"Yes, struck her down, your Grace. It just whacked

her on the back so that she was left for dead until the evening."

"Well, did she get over it?"

"She did get over it, but she is ailing now. Although, of course, she has been sickly since her birth."

"What, are you sick?" Nekhlyúdov asked the old woman, who continued to stand in the door, and began to groan the moment her husband spoke of her.

"Something catches right in here, that's all," she answered, pointing to her dirty, emaciated bosom.

"Again!" angrily exclaimed the young master, shrugging his shoulders. "There you are, sick, and you did not come to the hospital. That is what the hospital was made for. Have you not been told of it?"

"They told us, benefactor, but we have had no time: there is the manorial work, and the house, and the children, — I am all alone! There is nobody to help me —"

III.

NEKHLYÚDOV walked into the hut. The uneven, grimy walls were in the kitchen corner covered with all kinds of rags and clothes, while the corner of honour was literally red with cockroaches that swarmed about the images and benches. In the middle of this black, ill-smelling, eighteen-foot hut there was a large crack in the ceiling, and although supports were put in two places, the ceiling was so bent that it threatened to fall down any minute.

"Yes, the hut is in a very bad shape," said the master, gazing at the face of Churís, who, it seemed, did not wish to begin a conversation about this matter.

"It will kill us, and the children, too," the old woman kept saying, in a tearful voice, leaning against the oven under the hanging beds.

"Don't talk!" sternly spoke Churís, and, turning to the master, with a light, barely perceptible smile, which had formed itself under his quivering moustache, he said: "I am at a loss, your Grace, what to do with this hut. I have braced it and mended it, but all in vain."

"How are we to pass a winter in it? Oh, oh, oh!" said the woman.

"Now, if I could put in a few braces and fix a new strut," her husband interrupted her, with a calm, business-like expression, "and change one rafter, we might be able to get through another winter. We might be able to live here, only it will be all cut up by the braces; and if anybody should touch it, not a thing would be left alive; but

it might do, as long as it stands and holds together," he concluded, evidently satisfied with his argument.

Nekhlyúdov was annoyed and pained because Churís had come to such a state without having asked his aid before, whereas he had not once since his arrival refused the peasants anything, and had requested that everybody should come to him directly if they needed anything. He was even vexed at the peasant, angrily shrugged his shoulders, and frowned; but the sight of wretchedness about him, and Churís's calm and self-satisfied countenance amidst this wretchedness, changed his vexation into a melancholy, hopeless feeling.

"Now, Iván, why did you not tell me before?" he remarked reproachfully, sitting down on a dirty, crooked bench.

"I did not dare to, your Grace," answered Churís, with the same scarcely perceptible smile, shuffling his black, bare feet on the uneven dirt floor; but he said it so boldly and quietly that it was hard to believe that he had been afraid to approach the master.

"We are peasants: how dare we — " began the woman, sobbing.

"Stop your prattling," Churís again turned to her.

"You cannot live in this hut, that is impossible!" said Nekhlyúdov, after a moment's silence. "This is what we will do, my friend — "

"I am listening, sir," Churís interrupted him.

"Have you seen the stone huts, with the hollow walls, that I have had built in the new hamlet?"

"Of course I have, sir," replied Churís, showing his good white teeth in his smile. "We marvelled a great deal as they were building them, — wonderful huts! The boys made sport of them, saying that the hollow walls were storehouses, to keep rats away. Fine huts!" he concluded, with an expression of sarcastic incredulity, shaking his head. "Regular jails!"

"Yes, excellent huts, dry and warm, and not so likely to take fire," retorted the master, with a frown on his youthful face, obviously dissatisfied with the peasant's sarcasm.

"No question about that, your Grace, fine huts."

"Now, one of those huts is all ready. It is a thirty-foot hut, with vestibules and a storeroom, ready for occupancy. I will let you have it at your price; you will pay me when you can," said the master, with a self-satisfied smile, which he could not keep back, at the thought that he was doing a good act. "You will break down your old hut," he continued; "it will do yet for a barn. We will transfer the outhouses in some way. There is excellent water there. I will cut a garden for you out of the cleared ground, and also will lay out a piece of land for you in three parcels. You will be happy there. Well, are you not satisfied?" asked Nekhlyúdov, when he noticed that the moment he mentioned changing quarters Churís stood in complete immobility and, without a smile, gazed at the floor.

"It is your Grace's will," he answered, without lifting his eyes.

The old woman moved forward, as if touched to the quick, and was about to say something, but her husband anticipated her.

"It is your Grace's will," he repeated, firmly, and at the same time humbly, looking at his master, and shaking his hair, "but it will not do for us to live in the new hamlet."

"Why?"

"No, your Grace! We are badly off here, but if you transfer us there, we sha'n't stay peasants long. What kind of peasants can we be there? It is impossible to live there, saving your Grace!"

"Why not?"

"We shall be completely ruined, your Grace!"

"But why is it impossible to live there?"

"What life will it be? You judge for yourself: the place has never been inhabited; the quality of the water is unknown; there is no place to drive the cattle to. Our hemp plots have been manured here since time immemorial, but how is it there? Why, there is nothing but barrenness there. Neither fences, nor kilns, nor sheds, — nothing. We shall be ruined, your Grace, if you insist upon our going there, completely ruined! It is a new place, an unknown place —" he repeated, with a melancholy, but firm, shake of his head.

Nekhlyúdov began to prove to the peasant that the transfer would be very profitable to him, that fences and sheds would be put up, that the water was good there, and so forth; but Churís's dull silence embarrassed him, and he felt that he was not saying what he ought to. Churís did not reply; but when the master grew silent, he remarked, with a light smile, that it would be best to settle the old domestic servants and Aléshka the fool in that hamlet, to keep a watch on the grain.

"Now that would be excellent," he remarked, and smiled again. "It is a useless affair, your Grace!"

"What of it if it is an uninhabited place?" Nekhlyúdov expatiated, patiently. "Here was once an uninhabited place, and people are living in it now. And so you had better settle there in a lucky hour — Yes, you had better settle there —"

"But, your Grace, there is no comparison!" Churís answered with animation, as if afraid that the master might have taken his final resolution. "Here is a cheery place, a gay place, and we are used to it, and to the road, and the pond, where the women wash the clothes and the cattle go to water; and all our peasant surroundings have been here since time immemorial, — the threshing-floor, the garden, and the willows that my parents have set out. My grandfather and father have given their souls to God here, and I ask nothing else, your Grace, but to be able

to end my days here. If it should be your favour to mend the hut, we shall be greatly obliged to your Grace; if not, we shall manage to end our days in the old hut. Let us pray to the Lord all our days," he continued, making low obeisances. "Drive us not from our nest, sir."

While Churís was speaking, ever louder and louder sobs were heard under the beds, in the place where his wife stood, and when her husband pronounced the word "sir," his wife suddenly rushed out and, weeping, threw herself down at the master's feet:

"Do not ruin us, benefactor! You are our father, you are our mother! What business have we to move? We are old and lonely people. Both God and you —" She burst out in tears.

Nekhlyúdov jumped up from his seat, and wanted to raise the old woman, but she struck the earth floor with a certain voluptuousness of despair, and pushed away the master's hand.

"What are you doing? Get up, please! If you do not wish, you do not have to," he said, waving his hands, and retreating to the door.

When Nekhlyúdov seated himself again on the bench, and silence reigned in the hut, interrupted only by the blubbering of the old woman, who had again removed herself to her place under the beds, and was there wiping off her tears with the sleeve of her shirt, the young proprietor comprehended what meaning the dilapidated wretched hut, the broken well with the dirty puddle, the rotting stables and barns, and the split willows that could be seen through the crooked window, had for Churís and his wife, and a heavy, melancholy feeling came over him, and he was embarrassed.

"Why did you not say at the meeting of last week that you needed a hut? I do not know now how to help you. I told you all at the first meeting that I was settled in the estate, and that I meant to devote my life to you; that I

was prepared to deprive myself of everything in order to see you contented and happy,—and I vow before God that I will keep my word," said the youthful proprietor, unconscious of the fact that such ebullitions were unable to gain the confidence of any man, least of all a Russian, who loves not words but deeds, and who is averse to the expression of feelings, however beautiful.

The simple-hearted young man was so happy in the sentiment which he was experiencing that he could not help pouring it out.

Churís bent his head sideways and, blinking slowly, listened with forced attention to his master as to a man who must be listened to, though he may say things that are not very agreeable and have not the least reference to the listener.

"But I cannot give everybody all they ask of me. If I did not refuse anybody who asks me for timber, I should soon be left with none myself, and would be unable to give to him who is really in need of it. That is why I have put aside a part of the forest to be used for mending the peasant buildings, and have turned it over to the Commune. That forest is no longer mine, but yours, the peasants', and I have no say about it, but the Commune controls it as it sees fit. Come this evening to the meeting; I will tell the Commune of your need: if it resolves to give you a new hut, it is well, but I have no forest. I am anxious to help you with all my heart; but if you do not want to move, the Commune will have to arrange it for you, and not I. Do you understand me?"

"We are very well satisfied with your favour," answered the embarrassed Churís. "If you will deign to let me have a little timber for the outbuildings, I will manage one way or other. The Commune? Well, we know—"

"No, you had better come."

"Your servant, sir. I shall be there. Why should I not go? Only I will not ask the Commune for anything"

IV.

THE young proprietor evidently wanted to ask the peasant people something else; he did not rise from the bench, and with indecision looked now at Churís, and now into the empty, cold oven.

"Have you had your dinner?" he finally asked them.

Under Churís's moustache played a sarcastic smile, as though it amused him to hear the master ask such foolish questions; he did not answer.

"What dinner, benefactor?" said the old woman, with a deep sigh. "We have eaten some bread. That was our dinner. There was no time to-day to go for some sorrel, and so there was nothing to make soup with, and what kvas there was I gave to the children."

"To-day we have a hunger fast, your Grace," Churís chimed in, glossing his wife's words. "Bread and onions, — such is our peasant food. Thank the Lord I have some little bread; by your favour it has lasted until now; but the rest of our peasants have not even that. The onions are a failure this year. We sent a few days ago to Mikháylo the gardener, but he asks a penny a bunch, and we are too poor for that. We have not been to church since Easter, and we have no money with which to buy a candle for St. Nicholas."

Nekhlyúdov had long known, not by hearsay, nor trusting the words of others, but by experience, all the extreme wretchedness of his peasants; but all that reality was so incompatible with his education, his turn of mind, and manner of life, that he involuntarily forgot the

truth; and every time when he was reminded of it in a vivid and palpable manner, as now, his heart felt intolerably heavy and sad, as though he were tormented by the recollection of some unatoned crime which he had committed.

"Why are you so poor?" he said, involuntarily expressing his thought.

"What else are we to be, your Grace, if not poor? You know yourself what kind of soil we have: clay and clumps, and we must have angered God, for since the cholera we have had very poor crops of grain. The meadows and fields have grown less; some have been taken into the estate, others have been directly attached to the manorial fields. I am all alone and old. I would gladly try to do something, but I have no strength. My old woman is sick, and every year she bears a girl; they have to be fed. I am working hard all by myself, and there are seven souls in the house. It is a sin before God our Lord, but I often think it would be well if he took some of them away as soon as possible. It would be easier for me and for them too, it would be better than to suffer here —"

"Oh, oh!" the woman sighed aloud, as though confirming her husband's words.

"Here is my whole help," continued Churís, pointing to a flaxen-haired, shaggy boy of some seven years, with an immense belly, who, softly creaking the door, had just entered timidly, and, morosely fixing his wondering eyes upon the master, with both his hands was holding on to his father's shirt. "Here is my entire help," continued Churís, in a sonorous voice, passing his rough hand through his child's hair. "It will be awhile before he will be able to do anything, and in the meantime the work is above my strength. It is not so much my age as the rupture that is undoing me. In bad weather it just makes me scream. I ought to have given up the

land long ago, and been accounted an old man. Here is Ermílov, Démkin, Zyábrev, — they are all younger than I, but they have long ago given up the land. But I have no one to whom I might turn over the land, — that's where the trouble is. I must support the family, so I am struggling, your Grace."

"I would gladly make it easier for you, really. How can I?" said the young master, sympathetically, looking at the peasant.

"How make it easier? Of course, he who holds land must do the manorial work; that is an established rule. I shall wait for the little fellow to grow up. If it is your will, excuse him from school; for a few days ago the village scribe came and said that your Grace wanted him to come to school. Do excuse him: what mind can he have, your Grace? He is too young, and has not much sense yet."

"No; this, my friend, must be," said the master. "Your boy can comprehend, it is time for him to study. I am saying it for your own good. You judge yourself: when he grows up, and becomes a householder, he will know how to read and write, and he will read in church, — everything will go well with you, with God's aid," said Nekhlyúdov, trying to express himself as clearly as possible, and, at the same time, blushing and stammering.

"No doubt, your Grace, you do not wish us any harm; but there is nobody at home; my wife and I have to work in the manorial field, and, small though he is, he helps us some, by driving the cattle home, and taking the horses to water. As little as he is, he is a peasant all the same," and Churís, smiling, took hold of his boy's nose between his thick fingers, and cleaned it.

"Still, send him when he is at home, and has time, — do you hear? — without fail."

Churís drew a deep sigh, and did not reply.

V.

"THERE is something else I wanted to tell you," said Nekhlyúdov. "Why has not your manure been removed?"

"What manure is there to take away, your Grace? How many animals have I? A little mare and a colt, and the young heifer I gave last autumn to the porter; that is all the animals I have."

"You have so few animals, and yet you gave your heifer away?" the master asked, in amazement.

"What was I to feed her on?"

"Have you not enough straw to feed a cow with? Everybody else has."

"Others have manured land, and my land is mere clay that you can't do anything with."

"But that is what your manure is for, to take away the clay: and the soil will produce grain, and you will have something to feed your animals with."

"But if there are no animals, where is the manure to come from?"

"This is a strange *cercle vicieux*," thought Nekhlyúdov, but was at a loss how to advise the peasant.

"And then again, your Grace, not the manure makes the grain grow, but God," continued Churís. "Now, last year I got six ricks out of one unmanured eighth, but from another dressed eighth I did not reap as much as a cock. God alone!" he added, with a sigh. "And the cattle somehow do not thrive in our yard. They have died for six years in succession. Last year a heifer died,

the other I sold, for we had nothing to live on; two years ago a fine cow died; when she was driven home from the herd, there was nothing the matter with her, but she suddenly staggered, and staggered, and off she went. Just my bad luck!"

"Well, my friend, you may say what you please about not having any cattle, because you have no feed, and about having no feed, because you have no cattle, — here is some money for a cow," said Nekhlyúdov, blushing, and taking from his trousers' pocket a package of crumpled bills, and running through it. "Buy yourself a cow, with my luck, and get the feed from the barn, — I will give orders. Be sure and have a cow by next Sunday, — I will look in."

Churís smiled and shuffled his feet, and for so long did not stretch out his hand for the money, that Nekhlyúdov put it on the end of the table, and reddened even more.

"We are very well satisfied with your favour," said Churís, with his usual, slightly sarcastic smile.

The old woman sighed heavily several times, standing under the beds, and seemed to be uttering a prayer.

The young master felt embarrassed; he hastily rose from his bench, walked out into the vestibule, and called Churís. The sight of a man to whom he had done a good turn was so pleasant, that he did not wish to part from it so soon.

"I am glad I can help you," he said, stopping near the well. "It is all right to help you, because I know you are not a lazy man. You will work, and I will help you; with God's aid things will improve."

"There is no place for improvement, your Grace," said Churís, suddenly assuming a serious, and even an austere, expression on his face, as though dissatisfied with the master's supposition that he might improve. "I lived with my brothers when my father was alive, and we

suffered no want; but when he died, and we separated, things went from worse to worse. It is all because we are alone!"

"But why did you separate?"

"All on account of the women, your Grace. At that time your grandfather was not living, or they would not have dared to; then there was real order. He looked after everything, like you,—and we should not have dared to think of separating. Your grandfather did not let the peasants off so easily. But after him the estate was managed by Andréy Ilích,—may he not live by this memory,—he was a drunkard and an unreliable man. We went to him once, and a second time. 'There is no getting along with the women,' we said, 'let us separate.' Well, he gave it to us, but, in the end, the women had their way, and we separated; and you know what a peasant is all by himself! Well, there was no order here, and Andréy Ilích treated us as he pleased. 'Let there be everything!' but he never asked where a peasant was to get it. Then they increased the capitation tax, and began to collect more provisions for the table, but the land grew less, and the crops began to fail. And when it came to resurveying the land, he attached our manured land to the manorial strip, the rascal, and he left us just to die!

"Your father—the kingdom of heaven be his—was a good master, but we hardly ever saw him: he lived all the time in Moscow; of course, we had to carry supplies there frequently. There may have been bad roads, and no fodder, but we had to go! How could the master get along without it? We can't complain about that, only there was no order. Now, your Grace admits every peasant into your presence, and we are different people, and the steward is a different man. But before, the estate was left in guardianship, and there was no real master; the guardian was master, and Ilích was master,

and his wife was mistress, and the scribe was master. The peasants came to grief, oh, to so much grief!"

Again Nekhlyúdov experienced a feeling akin to shame or to pricks of conscience. He raised his hat a little, and walked away.

VI.

"YUKHVÁNKA the Shrewd wants to sell a horse," Nekhlyúdov read in his note-book, and crossed the street. Yukhvánka's hut was carefully thatched with straw from the manorial barn, and was constructed of fresh, light gray aspen timbers (also from the manorial forest), with two shutters painted red, and a porch with a roof, and a quaint shingle balustrade of an artistic design. The vestibule and the "cold" hut were also in proper condition; but the general aspect of sufficiency and well-being, which this collection of buildings had, was somewhat impaired by the outhouse which leaned against the gate, with its unfinished wicker fence and open thatch which could be seen from behind it.

At the same time that Nekhlyúdov was approaching the porch from one side, two peasant women came from the other with a full tub. One of them was the wife, the other the mother of Yukhvánka the Shrewd. The first was a plump, red-cheeked woman, with an unusually well-developed bosom, and broad, fleshy cheek-bones. She wore a clean shirt, embroidered on the sleeves and collar, an apron similarly decorated, a new linen skirt, leather shoes, glass beads, and a foppish square head-gear made of red paper and spangles.

The end of the yoke did not shake, but lay firmly on her broad and solid shoulder. The light exertion which was noticeable in her ruddy face, in the curvature of her back, and in the measured motion of her arms and legs, pointed to extraordinary health and masculine strength.

Yukhvánka's mother, who was carrying the other end of the yoke, was, on the contrary, one of those old women who seem to have reached the extreme limit of old age and disintegration possible in living man. Her bony frame, covered with a black, torn shirt and colourless skirt, was so bent that the yoke rested more on her back than on her shoulder. Both her hands, with the distorted fingers of which she seemed to cling to the yoke, were of a dark brown colour, and seemed incapable of unbending; her drooping head, which was wrapped in a rag, bore the most monstrous traces of wretchedness and old age. From under her narrow brow, which was furrowed in all directions by deep wrinkles, two red eyes, bereft of their lashes, looked dimly to the ground. One yellow tooth protruded from her upper sunken lip, and, shaking continually, now and then collided with her sharp chin. The wrinkles on the lower part of her face and throat resembled pouches that kept on shaking with every motion. She breathed heavily and hoarsely; but her bare, distorted feet, though apparently shuffling with difficulty against the ground, moved evenly one after the other.

VII.

HAVING almost collided with the master, the young woman deftly put down the tub, looked abashed, made a bow, glanced timidly at the master with her sparkling eyes, and trying with the sleeve of her embroidered shirt to conceal a light smile, and tripping in her leather shoes, ran up the steps.

"Mother, take the yoke to Aunt Nastásya," she said, stopping in the door and turning to the old woman.

The modest young proprietor looked sternly, but attentively, at the ruddy woman, frowned, and turned to the old woman, who straightened out the yoke with her crooked fingers, and, slinging it over her shoulder, obediently directed her steps to the neighbouring hut.

"Is your son at home?" asked the master.

The old woman bent her arched figure still more, bowed, and was about to say something, but she put her hands to her mouth and coughed so convulsively that Nekhlyúdov did not wait for the answer, and walked into the hut.

Yukhvánka, who was sitting in the red[1] corner on a bench, rushed to the oven the moment he espied the master, as if trying to hide from him; he hastily pushed something on the beds, and twitching his mouth and eyes, pressed against the wall, as if to make way for the master.

Yukhvánka was a blond, about thirty years of age, spare, slender, with a young beard that ran down to a point; he would have been a handsome man but for his

[1] The best corner, corresponding to a sitting-room, is called "red."

fleeting hazel eyes which looked unpleasantly beneath his wrinkled brows, and for the absence of two front teeth, which was very noticeable because his lips were short and in continuous motion. He was clad in a holiday shirt with bright red gussets, striped calico drawers, and heavy boots with wrinkled boot-legs.

The interior of Yukhvánka's hut was not so small and gloomy as Churís's, though it was as close, and smelled of smoke and sheepskins, and the peasant clothes and utensils were scattered about in the same disorderly fashion. Two things strangely arrested the attention: a small dented samovár, which stood on a shelf, and a black frame with a remnant of a glass, and a portrait of a general in a red uniform, which was hanging near the images.

Nekhlyúdov looked with dissatisfaction at the samovár, at the general's portrait, and at the beds, where from under a rag peeped out the end of a brass-covered pipe, and turned to the peasant.

"Good morning, Epifán," he said, looking into his eyes.

Epifán bowed, and mumbled, "We wish you health, 'r Grace," pronouncing the last words with peculiar tenderness, and his eyes in a twinkle surveyed the whole form of the master, the hut, the floor, and the ceiling, not stopping at anything; then he hurriedly walked up to the beds, pulled down a coat from them, and began to put it on.

"Why are you dressing yourself?" said Nekhlyúdov, seating himself on a bench, and obviously trying to look as stern as possible at Epifán.

"Please, 'r Grace, how can I? It seems to me we know —"

"I came in to see why you must sell a horse, how many horses you have, and what horse it is you want to sell," dryly said the master, evidently repeating questions prepared in advance.

"We are well satisfied with 'r Grace, because you have

deigned to call on me, a peasant," replied Yukhvánka, casting rapid glances at the general's portrait, at the oven, at the master's boots, and at all objects except Nekhlyúdov's face. "We always pray God for 'r Grace — "

"Why are you selling a horse?" repeated Nekhlyúdov, raising his voice, and clearing his throat.

Yukhvánka sighed, shook his hair (his glance again surveyed the whole hut), and, noticing the cat that had been quietly purring on a bench, he called out to her, "Scat, you scamp!" and hurriedly turned to the master. "The horse, 'r Grace, which is useless — If it were a good animal I would not sell it, 'r Grace."

"How many horses have you in all?"

"Three, 'r Grace."

"Have you any colts?"

"Why, yes, 'r Grace! I have one colt."

VIII.

"Come, show me your horses! Are they in the yard?"

"Yes, 'r Grace. I have done as I have been ordered to, 'r Grace. Would we dare to disobey 'r Grace? Yákov Alpátych commanded me not to let the horses out to pasture for the next day, as the prince wanted to inspect them, so we did not let them out. We do not dare disobey 'r Grace."

As Nekhlyúdov walked out of the door, Yukhvánka got the pipe down from the beds, and threw it behind the oven. His lips quivered just as restlessly, though the master was not looking at him.

A lean gray mare was rummaging through some musty hay under the shed; a two-months-old, long-legged colt of an indefinable colour, with bluish feet and mouth, did not leave her mother's thin tail that was all stuck up with burrs. In the middle of the yard stood, blinking and pensively lowering his head, a thick-bellied chestnut gelding, apparently a good peasant horse.

"Are these all your horses?"

"By no means, 'r Grace. Here is a little mare and a little colt," answered Yukhvánka, pointing to the horses which the master could not help having noticed.

"I see that. Now, which one do you want to sell?"

"This one, 'r Grace," he answered, waving with the flap of his coat in the direction of the drowsy gelding, continually blinking, and twitching his lips. The gelding opened his eyes and lazily turned his back to him.

"He does not look old, and is apparently a sound horse," said Nekhlyúdov. "Catch him, and show me his teeth! I will find out if he is old."

"It is impossible for one person to catch him, 'r Grace. The whole beast is not worth a penny. He has a temper: he bites and kicks, 'r Grace," answered Yukhvánka, smiling merrily, and turning his eyes in all directions.

"What nonsense! Catch him, I tell you!"

Yukhvánka smiled for a long time, and shuffled his feet, and not until Nekhlyúdov cried out in anger, "Well, will you?" did he run under the shed and bring a halter. He began to run after the horse, frightening him, and walking up to him from behind, and not in front.

The young master was evidently disgusted, and, no doubt, wanted to show his agility. "Give me the halter!" he said.

"I pray, 'r Grace! How can you? —"

But Nekhlyúdov walked up to the horse's head and, suddenly taking hold of his ears, bent it down with such a force that the gelding, who, as could be seen, was a very gentle peasant horse, tottered and groaned, in his attempt to tear himself away. When Nekhlyúdov noticed that it was unnecessary to use such force, and when he glanced at Yukhvánka, who did not cease smiling, the thought, so offensive at his years, occurred to him that Yukhvánka was making fun of him and mentally regarding him as a child. He blushed, let the horse go, and without the help of a halter opened his mouth and examined his teeth: the teeth were sound, the crowns full, and the young proprietor was enough informed to know that all this meant that the horse was young.

Yukhvánka, in the meantime, had gone under the shed, and, noticing that the harrow was not in place, he lifted it and put it on edge against the fence.

"Come here!" cried the master, with an expression of

childlike annoyance on his face, and almost with tears of mortification and anger in his voice. "Well, you call that an old horse?"

"I pray, 'r Grace, he is very old, some twenty years old — some horses — "

"Silence! You are a liar and a good-for-nothing, because an honest peasant would not lie, — he has no cause to lie!" said Nekhlyúdov, choking with tears of anger, which rose in his throat. He grew silent in order not to burst out into tears, and thus disgrace himself before the peasant. Yukhvánka, too, was silent, and, with the expression of a man who is ready to burst into tears, snuffled and slightly jerked his head.

"Well, with what animal will you plough your field when you have sold this horse?" continued Nekhlyúdov, having calmed down sufficiently to speak in his customary voice. "You are purposely sent to do work on foot, so as to give your horses a chance to improve for the ploughing, and you want to sell your last horse. But, the main thing is, why do you lie?"

The moment the master grew calm, Yukhvánka quieted down, too. He stood straight, and, still jerking his lips, let his eyes flit from one object to another.

"We will drive out to work, 'r Grace," he replied, "not worse than the rest."

"What will you drive with?"

"Do not worry, we will do the work of 'r Grace," he answered, shouting to the gelding, and driving him away. "I should not have thought of selling him if I did not need the money."

"What do you need the money for?"

"There is no bread, 'r Grace, and I have to pay my debts to the peasants, 'r Grace."

"How so, no bread? How is it the others, who have families, have bread, and you, who have none, have not any? What has become of your grain?"

"We have eaten it up, and now not a crumb is left. I will buy a horse in the fall, 'r Grace."

"You shall not dare sell this horse!"

"If so, 'r Grace, what kind of a life will it be? There is no bread, and I must not sell anything," he answered sideways, twitching his lips, and suddenly casting a bold glance upon the master's face. "It means, we shall have to starve."

"Look here, man!" cried Nekhlyúdov, pale with anger, and experiencing a feeling of personal hatred for the peasant. "I will not keep such peasants as you. It will go hard with you."

"Such will be your will, 'r Grace," he answered, covering his eyes with a feigned expression of humility, "if I have not served you right. And yet, nobody has noticed any vices in me. Of course, if 'r Grace is displeased with me, 'r Grace will do as you wish; only I do not know why I should suffer."

"I will tell you why: because your yard is not fenced in, your manure not ploughed up, your fences are broken, and you sit at home and smoke a pipe, and do not work; because you do not give your mother, who has turned the whole farm over to you, a piece of bread, and permit your wife to strike her, and have treated her so badly that she has come to me to complain about you."

"I beg your pardon, 'r Grace, I do not know what pipes you are speaking of," Yukhvánka answered, confusedly, apparently very much insulted by the accusation of smoking a pipe. "It is easy to say anything about a man."

"There you are lying again! I saw myself —"

"How would I dare to lie to 'r Grace?"

Nekhlyúdov was silent, and, biting his lips, paced the yard. Yukhvánka stood in one spot and, without raising his eyes, watched his master's feet.

"Listen, Epifán," said Nekhlyúdov, in a voice of childlike gentleness, stopping in front of the peasant, and en-

deavouring to conceal his agitation. "Bethink yourself. If you want to be a good peasant, you must change your life: leave your bad habits, stop lying, give up drinking, and honour your mother. I know all about you. Attend to your farm, and stop stealing timber in the Crown forest and frequenting the tavern! What good is there in it, think! If you have need of anything, come to me, ask straight out for what you need, and tell why you need it, and do not lie, but tell the whole truth, and I will not refuse you anything I can do for you."

"If you please, 'r Grace, we can understand 'r Grace!" answered Yukhvánka, smiling, as if fully comprehending the charm of the master's jest.

This smile and reply completely disappointed Nekhlyúdov, who had hoped to touch the peasant and bring him back on the true path by persuasion. And then, it seemed improper for him, who was possessed of power, to persuade his peasant, and it seemed, too, that everything he said was not exactly what he ought to have said. He lowered his head in sadness and walked into the vestibule. The old woman was sitting on the threshold and groaning aloud, in order, as it seemed, to express her sympathy with the master's words which she had heard.

"Here is some money for bread," Nekhlyúdov whispered into her ear, putting a bill into her hand. "Only buy for yourself, and do not give it to Yukhvánka, who will spend it in drinks."

The old woman took hold of the lintel with her bony hand, in order to rise and thank the master, and her head began to shake, but Nekhlyúdov was on the other side of the street when she rose.

IX.

"DAVÝDKA the White asked for grain and posts," it said in the note-book after Yukhvánka.

After passing several huts, Nekhlyúdov, in turning into a lane, met his steward, Yákov Alpátych, who, upon noticing his master at a distance, doffed his oilcloth cap, and, taking out his fulled handkerchief, began to wipe his fat, red face.

"Put it on, Yákov! Yákov, put it on, I tell you —"

"Where have you been, your Grace?" asked Yákov, protecting himself with his cap against the sun, but not donning it.

"I have been at Yukhvánka the Shrewd's. Tell me, if you please, what has made him so bad," said the master, continuing on his way.

"Why so, your Grace?" replied the manager, following the master at a respectful distance. He had put on his cap and was twirling his moustache.

"Why? He is a thorough scamp, a lazy man, a thief, a liar; he torments his mother, and, so far as I can see, he is such a confirmed good-for-nothing that he will never reform."

"I do not know, your Grace, why he has displeased you so much —"

"And his wife," the master interrupted his manager, "seems to be a worthless wench. The old woman is clad worse than a mendicant, and has nothing to eat, but she is all dressed up, and so is he. I really do not know what to do with them."

Yákov was obviously embarrassed when Nekhlyúdov spoke of Yukhvánka's wife.

"Well, if he has acted like that, your Grace," he began, "we must find means. It is true he is indigent, like all peasants who are alone, but he is taking some care of himself, not like the others. He is a clever and intelligent peasant, and passably honest. He always comes when the capitation tax is collected. And he has been elder for three years, during my administration, and no fault was found with him. In the third year it pleased the guardian to depose him, and then he attended properly to his farm. It is true, when he lived at the post in town, he used to drink a bit, — and measures must be taken. When he went on a spree, we threatened him, and he came back to his senses: he was then all right, and in his family there was peace; but if you are not pleased to take these measures, I really do not know what to do with him. Well, he has got very low. He is not fit to be sent into the army again because, as you may have noticed, he lacks two teeth. But he is not the only one, I take the liberty of reporting to you, who is not in the least afraid — "

"Let this alone, Yákov," answered Nekhlyúdov, softly smiling; "we have talked it over often enough. You know what I think of it, and I shall not change my mind, whatever you may tell me."

"Of course, your Grace, all this is known to you," said Yákov, shrugging his shoulders and gazing at the master's back, as though what he saw did not promise anything good. "But as to your troubling yourself about the old woman, it is all in vain," he continued. "It is true she has brought up the orphans, has raised and married off Yukhvánka, and all that. But it is a common rule with the peasants that when a father or mother transfers the farm to the son, the son and daughter-in-law become the masters, and the old woman has to earn her bread as best she can. Of course they have not any tender feelings, but

that is the common rule among peasants. And I take the liberty of informing you that the old woman has troubled you in vain. She is a clever old woman and a good housekeeper; but why should she trouble the master for everything? I will admit she may have quarrelled with her daughter-in-law, and the daughter-in-law may have pushed her, — those are women's affairs. They might have made up again, without her troubling you. You deign to take it too much to heart," said the manager, looking with a certain gentleness and condescension at the master, who was silently walking, with long steps, up the street in front of him.

"Homeward bound, sir?" he asked.

"No, to Davýdka the White, or Kozlóv: is not that his name?"

"He, too, is a good-for-nothing, permit me to inform you. The whole tribe of the Kozlóvs is like that. No matter what you may do with them, it has no effect. I drove yesterday over the peasant field, and I saw he had not sowed any buckwheat; what are we to do with such a lot? If only the old man taught the son, but he is just such a good-for-nothing: he bungles everything, whether he works for himself or for the manor. The guardian and I have tried everything with him: we have sent him to the commissary's office, and have punished him at home, — but you do not like that —"

"Whom, the old man?"

"The old man, sir. The guardian has punished him often, and at the full gatherings of the Commune; but will you believe it, your Grace, it had no effect: he just shook himself, and went away, and did the same. And I must say, Davýdka is a peaceful peasant, and not at all stupid: he does not smoke, nor drink, that is," explained Yákov, "he does something worse than drink. All there is left to do is to send him to the army, or to Siberia, and nothing else. The whole tribe of the Kozlóvs is like that.

Matryúshka, who lives in that hovel, also belongs to their family, and is the same kind of an accursed good-for-nothing. So you do not need me, your Grace?" added the manager, noticing that the master was not listening to him.

"No, you may go," Nekhlyúdov answered, absent-mindedly, and directed his steps to Davýdka the White.

Davýdka's hut stood crooked and alone at the edge of the village. Near it was no yard, no kiln, no barn; only a few dirty stalls clung to one side of it: on the other were heaped in a pile wattles and timber that were to be used for the yard. Tall, green steppe-grass grew in the place where formerly had been the yard. There was not a living being near the hut, except a pig that lay in the mud in front of the threshold, and squealed.

Nekhlyúdov knocked at the broken window; but, as nobody answered him, he walked up to the vestibule and shouted: "Ho there!" Nobody replied. He walked through the vestibule, looked into the empty stalls, and walked through the open door into the hut.

An old red cock and two hens promenaded over the floor and benches, jerking their crops, and clattering with their claws. When they saw a man, they fluttered with wide-spread wings against the walls with a clucking of despair, and one of them flew upon the oven.

The eighteen-foot hut was all occupied by the oven with a broken pipe, a weaver's loom which had not been removed in spite of summer, and a begrimed table with a warped and cracked board. Though it was dry without, there was a dirty puddle near the threshold which had been formed at a previous rain by a leak in the ceiling and roof. There were no beds. It was hard to believe that this was an inhabited place, there was such a decided aspect of neglect and disorder, both inside and outside the hut; and yet Davýdka the White lived in it with his whole family. At that particular moment, in spite of the heat of the June day, Davýdka lay, his

head wrapped in a sheepskin half-coat, on the corner of the oven, fast asleep. The frightened hen, which had alighted on the oven and had not yet calmed down, was walking over Davýdka's back, without waking him.

Not finding any one in the hut, Nekhlyúdov was on the point of leaving, when a protracted, humid sigh betrayed the peasant.

"Oh, who is there?" cried the master.

On the oven was heard another protracted sigh.

"Who is there? Come here!"

Another sigh, a growl, and a loud yawn were the answer to the master's call.

"Well, will you come?"

Something stirred on the oven. There appeared the flap of a worn-out sheepskin; a big foot in a torn bast shoe came down, then another, and finally the whole form of Davýdka the White sat up on the oven, and lazily and discontentedly rubbed his eyes with his large fist. He slowly bent his head, yawned, gazed at the hut, and, when he espied the master, began to turn around a little faster than before, but still so leisurely that Nekhlyúdov had sufficient time to pace three times the distance from the puddle to the loom, before Davýdka got off the oven.

Davýdka the White was actually white; his hair, his body, and face, — everything was exceedingly white. He was tall and very stout, that is, stout like a peasant, with his whole body, and not merely with his belly; but it was a flabby, unhealthy obesity. His fairly handsome face, with its dark blue, calm eyes and broad, long beard, bore the imprint of infirmity. There was neither tan nor ruddiness in his face; it was of a pale, sallow complexion, with a light violet shade under his eyes, and looked suffused with fat, and swollen. His hands were swollen and sallow, like those of people who suffer with the dropsy, and were covered with fine white hair. He

was so sleepy that he could not open his eyes wide, nor stand still, without tottering and yawning.

"Are you not ashamed," began Nekhlyúdov, "to sleep in bright daylight, when you ought to build a yard, and when you have no grain?"

As soon as Davýdka came to his senses, and began to understand that the master was standing before him, he folded his hands over his abdomen, lowered his head, turning it a little to one side, and did not stir a limb. He was silent; but the expression of his face and the attitude of his whole form said, "I know, I know, it is not the first time I hear that. Beat me if you must, — I will bear it."

It looked as though he wanted the master to stop talking and to start beating him at once; to strike him hard on his cheeks, but to leave him in peace as soon as possible.

When Nekhlyúdov noticed that Davýdka did not understand him, he tried with various questions to rouse the peasant from his servile and patient silence.

"Why did you ask me for timber when you have had some lying here for a month, and that, too, when you have most time your own, eh?"

Davýdka kept stubborn silence, and did not stir.

"Well, answer!"

Davýdka muttered something, and blinked with his white eyelashes.

"But you must work, my dear: what will happen without work? Now, you have no grain, and why? Because your land is badly ploughed, and has not been harrowed, and was sowed in too late, — all on account of laziness. You ask me for grain: suppose I give it to you, because you must not starve! It will not do to act in this way. Whose grain am I giving you? What do you think, whose? Answer me: whose grain am I giving you?" Nekhlyúdov stubbornly repeated his question.

"The manorial," mumbled Davýdka, timidly and questioningly raising his eyes.

"And where does the manorial grain come from? Think of it: who has ploughed the field? Who has harrowed it? Who has sowed it in, and garnered it? The peasants? Is it not so? So you see, if I am to give the manorial grain to the peasants, I ought to give more to those who have worked more for it; but you have worked less, and they complain of you at the manor; you have worked less, and you ask more. Why should I give to you, and not to others? If all were lying on their sides and sleeping, as you are doing, we should all have starved long ago. We must work, my friend, but this is bad, — do you hear, Davýd?"

"I hear, sir," he slowly muttered through his teeth.

X.

JUST then the head of a peasant woman carrying linen on a yoke flashed by the window, and a minute later Davýdka's mother entered the hut. She was a tall woman of about fifty years, and was well preserved and active. Her pockmarked and wrinkled face was not handsome, but her straight, firm nose, her compressed thin lips, and her keen gray eyes expressed intelligence and energy. The angularity of her shoulders, the flatness of her bosom, the bony state of her hands, and the well-developed muscles on her black bare feet witnessed to the fact that she had long ceased to be a woman, and was only a labourer.

She entered boldly into the room, closed the door, pulled down her skirt, and angrily looked at her son. Nekhlyúdov wanted to tell her something, but she turned away from him, and began to make the signs of the cross before a black wooden image that peered out from behind the loom. Having finished her devotion, she straightened out her dirty checkered kerchief in which her head was wrapped, and made a low obeisance before the master.

"A pleasant Lord's Day to your Grace," she said. "May God preserve you, our father — !"

When Davýdka saw his mother he evidently became embarrassed, bent his back a little, and lowered his neck even more.

"Thank you, Arína," answered Nekhlyúdov. "I have just been speaking with your son about your farm."

Arína, or, as the peasants had called her when she was still a maiden, Aríshka-Burlák,[1] supported her chin with the fist of her right hand, which, in its turn, was resting on the palm of her left hand; and, without hearing what the master had still to say, began to speak in such a penetrating and loud voice that the whole hut was filled with sound, and in the street it might have appeared that several women were speaking at the same time.

"What use, father, is there of speaking to him? He can't even speak like a man. There he stands, blockhead," she continued, contemptuously pointing with her head to Davýdka's wretched, massive figure. "My farm, your Grace? We are mendicants; there are no people in your whole village more wretched: we have neither of our own, nor anything for the manorial dues — a shame! He has brought us to all this. I bore him, raised, and fed him, and with anticipation waited for him to grow up. Here he is: the grain is bursting, but there is no more work in him than in this rotten log. All he knows how to do is to lie on the oven, or to stand and scratch his stupid head," she said, mocking him. "If you, father, could threaten him somehow! I beg you: punish him for the Lord's sake; send him to the army, and make an end of it. I have lost my patience with him, I tell you."

"How is it you are not ashamed, Davýdka, to bring your mother to such a state?" said Nekhlyúdov, reproachfully turning to the peasant.

Davýdka did not budge.

"It would be different if he were a sickly man," Arína continued, with the same vivacity and gestures, "but you look at him, he is fatter than a mill pig. He is a good-looking chap, fit enough to work! But no, he lies like a lubber all day on the oven. My eyes get tired looking when he undertakes to do something; when he rises, or

[1] Burlák is a labourer towing boats up the Vólga.

moves, or anything," she said, drawling her words and awkwardly turning her angular shoulders from side to side. "Now, for example, to-day the old man has gone for brushwood into the forest, and he has told him to dig holes; but no, not he, he has not had the spade in his hands —" She grew silent for a moment. "He has undone me, abandoned woman!" she suddenly whined, waving her hands, and walking up to her son with a threatening gesture. "Your smooth, good-for-nothing snout, the Lord forgive me!"

She turned away contemptuously and in despair from him, spit out, and again turned to the master, continuing to wave her hands, with the same animation and with tears in her eyes:

"I am all alone, benefactor. My old man is sick and old, and there is little good in him, and I am all sole alone. It is enough to make a stone burst. It would be easier if I just could die; that would be the end. He has worn me out, that rascal! Our father! I have no more strength! My daughter-in-law died from work, and I shall, too."

XI.

"WHAT, died?" Nekhlyúdov asked, incredulously.

"She died from exertion, benefactor, as God is holy. We took her two years ago from Babúrin," she continued, suddenly changing her angry expression to one of tearfulness and sadness. "She was a young, healthy, obedient woman, father. She had lived, as a maiden, in plenty, at her father's home, and had experienced no want; but when she came to us, and had to do the work, — in the manor and at home, and everywhere — She and I, that was all there was. To me it did not matter much. I am used to it, but she was pregnant, and began to suffer; and she worked all the while beyond her strength, until she, my dear girl, overworked herself. Last year, during St. Peter's Fast, she, to her misfortune, bore a boy, and there was no bread; we barely managed to pick up something, father; the hard work was on hand, and her breasts dried up. It was her first-born, there was no cow, and we are peasant people, and it is not for us to bring up children on the bottle; and, of course, she was a foolish woman, and worried her life away. And when her baby died, she cried and cried from sorrow, and sobbed and sobbed, my darling, and there was want, and work, ever worse and worse; she wore herself out all summer, and died, my darling, on the day of St. Mary's Intercession. It is he who has undone her, beast!" She again turned to her son with the anger of despair. "I wanted to ask you, your Grace," she continued after a short silence, lowering her head, and bowing.

"What is it?" Nekhlyúdov asked absent-mindedly, still agitated by her recital.

"He is a young man yet. You can't expect much work from me; to-day I am alive, to-morrow dead. How can he be without a wife? He will not be a peasant, if he is not married. Have pity on us, father."

"That is, you want to marry him off? Well?"

"Do us this favour before God! You are our father and mother."

She gave her son a sign, and both dropped on the ground before their master's feet.

"Why do you make these earth obeisances?" said Nekhlyúdov, angrily raising her by her shoulder. "Can't you tell it without doing so? You know that I do not like it. Marry off your son, if you wish. I should be glad to hear that you have a bride in view."

The old woman rose, and began to wipe off her dry eyes with her sleeve. Davýdka followed her example, and, having wiped his eyes with his dry fist, continued to stand in the same patient and subservient attitude as before, and to listen to what Arína was saying.

"There is a bride, why not? Mikhéy's Vasyútka is a likely enough girl, but she will not marry him without your will."

"Does she not consent?"

"No, benefactor, not if it comes to consenting."

"Well, then what is to be done? I cannot compel her; look for another girl, if not here, elsewhere; I will buy her out, as long as she will give her own consent, but you can't marry by force. There is no law for that, and it would be a great sin."

"O benefactor! But is it likely that any girl would be willing to marry him, seeing our manner of life and poverty? Even a soldier's wife would not wish to take upon herself such misery. What peasant will be willing to give his daughter to us? The most desperate man will

not give his. We are mendicants, and nothing else. They will say that we have starved one woman, and would do so with their daughter. Who will give his?" she added, skeptically shaking her head. "Consider this, your Grace."

"But what can I do?"

"Think of some plan for us, father!" Arína repeated, persuasively. "What are we to do?"

"What plan can I find? I can do nothing for you in this matter."

"Who will do something for us, if not you?" said Arína, dropping her head, and waving her hands with an expression of sad perplexity.

"You have asked for grain, and I will order it to be given to you," said the master, after a short silence, during which Arína drew deep breaths and Davýdka seconded her. "That is all I can do."

Nekhlyúdov stepped into the vestibule. The woman and her son followed the master, bowing.

XII.

"O MY orphanhood!" said Arína, drawing a deep breath.

She stopped, and angrily looked at her son. Davýdka immediately wheeled around and, with difficulty lifting his fat leg, in an immense dirty bast shoe, over the threshold, was lost in the opposite door.

"What am I going to do with him, father?" continued Arína, turning to the master. "You see yourself what he is! He is not a bad peasant: he does not drink, is peaceful, and would not harm a child, — it would be a sin to say otherwise; there is nothing bad about him, and God only knows what it is that has befallen him that he has become his own enemy. He himself is not satisfied with it. Really, father, it makes my heart bleed when I see how he worries about it himself. Such as he is, my womb has borne him; I am sorry, very sorry for him! He would do no harm to me, or his father, or the authorities; he is a timid man, I might say, like a child. How can he remain a widower? Do something for us, benefactor," she repeated, evidently trying to correct the bad impression which her scolding might have produced on the master. "Your Grace," she continued, in a confidential whisper, "I have reasoned this way and that way, but I can't make out what has made him so. It cannot be otherwise but that evil people have bewitched him."

She was silent for a moment.

"If the man could be found, he might be cured."

"What nonsense you are talking, Arína! How can one bewitch?"

"Father, they can bewitch so as to make one a no-man for all his life! There are many evil people in the world! Out of malice they take out a handful of earth in one's track — or something else — and one is a no-man for ever. It is easy to sin! I have been thinking of going to see old man Dundúk, who lives at Vorobévka: he knows all kinds of incantations, and he knows herbs, and he takes away the evil eye, and draws the dropsy out of the spine. Maybe he will help!" said the woman. "Maybe he will cure him!"

"Now that is wretchedness and ignorance!" thought the young master, sorrowfully bending his head, and walking with long strides down the village. "What shall I do with him? It is impossible to leave him in this state, on my account, and as an example for others, and for his own sake," he said to himself, counting out the causes on his fingers. "I cannot see him in this condition, but how am I to take him out of it? He destroys all my best plans for the estate. If such peasants are left in it, my dreams will never be fulfilled," he thought, experiencing mortification and anger against the peasant for destroying his plans. "Shall I send him as a settler to Siberia, as Yákov says, when he does not want to be well off, or into the army? That's it. I shall at least be rid of him, and shall thus save a good peasant," he reflected.

He thought of it with delight; at the same time a certain indistinct consciousness told him that he was thinking with one side of his reason only, and something was wrong. He stopped. "Wait, what am I thinking about?" he said to himself; "yes, into the army, to Siberia. For what? He is a good man, better than many others, and how do I know — Give him his liberty?" he reflected, considering the question not with one side of his reason

only, as before. "It is unjust, and impossible." Suddenly a thought came to him that gave him great pleasure; he smiled, with the expression of a man who has solved a difficult problem. "I will take him to the manor," he said to himself. "I will watch over him myself, and with gentleness and persuasion, and proper selection of occupations, accustom him to work, and reform him."

XIII.

"I WILL do so," Nekhlyúdov said to himself with cheerful self-satisfaction, and, recalling that he had to visit yet the rich peasant, Dutlóv, he directed his steps to a tall and spacious building, with two chimneys, which stood in the middle of the village. As he was getting near it, he met, near the neighbouring hut, a tall, slatternly woman, of some forty years of age, who came out to see him.

"A pleasant holiday, sir," the woman said, without the least timidity, stopping near him, smiling pleasantly, and bowing.

"Good morning, nurse," he answered. "How are you getting on? I am going to see your neighbour."

"Yes, your Grace, that is good. But why do you not deign to call on us? My old man would be ever so happy to see you."

"Well, I will come in, to talk with you, nurse. Is this your hut?"

"Yes, sir."

And the nurse ran ahead. Nekhlyúdov walked after her into the vestibule, sat down on a pail, took out a cigarette, and lighted it.

"It is hot there; let us stay here and talk," he answered to the nurse's invitation to walk into the hut.

The nurse was still in her prime, and a fine-looking woman. In her features, and especially in her large black eyes, there was a great resemblance to the master's face. She put her hands under her apron, and, boldly looking

at the master and continually shaking her head, began to speak with him:

"What is the reason, sir, you are honouring Dutlóv with a visit?"

"I want him to rent from me thirty desyatínas[1] of land, and start a farm of his own, and also to buy some timber with me. He has money, — why should it lie idle? What do you think about that, nurse?"

"Well! Of course, sir, the Dutlóvs are powerful people. I suppose he is the first peasant in the whole estate," answered the nurse, nodding her head. "Last year he added a new structure out of his own timber, — he did not trouble the master. Of horses, there will be some six sets of three, outside of colts and yearlings; and of stock, there are so many cows and sheep that when they drive them home from the field, and the women go out to drive them into the yard, there is a terrible crush at the gate; and of bees, there must be two hundred hives, and maybe more. He is a powerful peasant, he must have money, too."

"Do you think he has much money?" the master asked.

"People say, of course, out of malice, that the man has a great deal; naturally, he would not tell, nor would he let his sons know, but he must have. Why should he not put his money out for a forest? Unless he should be afraid to let out the rumour about having money. Some five years ago he invested a little money in bottom meadows with Shkálik the porter; but I think Shkálik cheated him, so that the old man was out of three hundred roubles; since then he has given it up. And why should he not be well fixed, your Grace," continued the nurse, "he is living on three parcels of land, the family is large, all workers, and the old man himself — there is nothing to be said against him — is a fine manager. He has luck in

[1] A desyatína is equal to 2,400 square fathoms.

everything, so that the people are all wondering; he has luck with the grain, with the horses, the cattle, the bees, and his children. He has married them all off. He found wives for them among his own, and now he has married Ilyúshka to a free girl, — he has himself paid for her emancipation. And she has turned out to be a fine woman."

"Do they live peaceably?" asked the master.

"As long as there is a real head in the house, there will be peace. Though with the Dutlóvs it is as elsewhere with women: the daughters-in-law quarrel behind the oven, yet the sons live peacefully together under the old man."

The nurse grew silent for a moment.

"Now the old man wants to make his eldest son, Karp, the master of the house. He says he is getting too old and that his business is with the bees. Well, Karp is a good man, an accurate man, but he will not be such a manager as the old man, by a good deal. He has not his intellect."

"Maybe Karp will be willing to take up land and forests, what do you think?" said the master, wishing to find out from his nurse what she knew about her neighbours.

"I doubt it, sir," continued the nurse; "the old man has not disclosed his money to his son. As long as the old man is alive, and the money is in his house, his mind will direct affairs; besides, they are more interested in teaming."

"And the old man will not consent?"

"He will be afraid."

"What will he be afraid of?"

"How can a manorial peasant declare his money, sir? There might be an unlucky hour, and all his money would be lost! There, he went into partnership with the porter, and he made a mistake. How could he sue him? And

thus the money was all lost; and with the proprietor it would be lost without appeal."

"Yes, on this account —" said Nekhlyúdov, blushing. "Good-bye, nurse."

"Good-bye, your Grace. I thank you humbly."

XIV.

"HAD I not better go home?" thought Nekhlyúdov, walking up to Dutlóv's gate, and feeling an indefinable melancholy and moral fatigue.

Just then the new plank gate opened before him with a creak, and a fine-looking, ruddy, light-complexioned lad, of about eighteen years of age, in driver's attire, appeared in the gateway, leading behind him a set of three stout-legged, sweaty, shaggy horses; boldly shaking his flaxen hair, he bowed to the master.

"Is your father at home, Ilyá?" asked Nekhlyúdov.

"He is with the bees, back of the yard," answered the lad, leading one horse after another through the half-open gate.

"No, I will stick to my determination; I will make the proposition to him, and will do my part," thought Nekhlyúdov, and, letting the horses pass by, he went into Dutlóv's spacious yard. He could see that the manure had lately been removed: the earth was still black and sweaty, and in places, particularly near the gate, lay scattered red-fibred shreds. In the yard, and under the high sheds, stood in good order many carts, ploughs, sleighs, blocks, tubs, and all kinds of peasant possessions. Pigeons flitted to and fro and cooed in the shade under the broad, solid rafters. There was an odour of manure and tar.

In one corner Karp and Ignát were fixing a new transom-bed on a large, three-horse, steel-rimmed cart. Dutlóv's three sons resembled each other very much. The

youngest, Ilyá, whom Nekhlyúdov had met in the gate, had no beard, and was smaller, ruddier, and more foppishly clad than the other two. The second, Ignát, was taller, more tanned, had a pointed beard, and, although he too wore boots, a driver's shirt, and a lambskin cap, he did not have the careless, holiday aspect of his younger brother. The eldest, Karp, was taller still, wore bast shoes, a gray caftan, and a shirt without gussets; he had a long red beard, and looked not only solemn, but even gloomy.

"Do you command me to send for father, your Grace?" he said, walking up to the master and bowing slightly and awkwardly.

"No, I will go myself to the apiary; I wish to look at his arrangement of it; but I want to talk with you," said Nekhlyúdov, walking over to the other end of the yard, so that Ignát might not hear what he was going to say to Karp.

The self-confidence and a certain pride, which were noticeable in the whole manner of these two peasants, and that which his nurse had told him, so embarrassed the young master that he found it hard to make up his mind to tell him of the matter in hand. He felt as though he were guilty of something; and it was easier for him to speak to one of the brothers, without being heard by the other. Karp looked somewhat surprised at being asked by the master to step aside, but he followed him.

"It is this," began Nekhlyúdov, hesitating, "I wanted to ask you how many horses you had."

"There will be some five sets of three; there are also some colts," Karp answered, freely, scratching his back.

"Do your brothers drive the stage?"

"We drive the stage with three tróykas. Ilyúshka has been doing some hauling; he has just returned."

"Do you find that profitable? How much do you earn in this manner?"

"What profit can there be, your Grace? We just feed ourselves and the horses, and God be thanked for that."

"Then why do you not busy yourselves with something else? You might buy some forest or rent some land."

"Of course, your Grace, we might rent some land, if it came handy."

"This is what I want to propose to you. What is the use of teaming, just to earn your feed, when you can rent some thirty desyatínas of me? I will let you have the whole parcel which lies behind Sápov's, and you can start a large farm."

Nekhlyúdov was now carried away by his plan of a peasant farm, which he had thought over and recited to himself more than once, and he began to expound to Karp, without stammering, his plan of a peasant farm. Karp listened attentively to the words of the master.

"We are very well satisfied with your favour," he said, when Nekhlyúdov stopped and looked at him, expecting an answer. "Of course, there is nothing bad in this. It is better for a peasant to attend to the soil than to flourish his whip. Peasants of our kind get easily spoilt, when they travel among strange men, and meet all kinds of people. There is nothing better for a peasant than to busy himself with the land."

"What do you think of it, then?"

"As long as father is alive, your Grace, there is no use in my thinking. His will decides."

"Take me to the apiary; I will talk to him."

"This way, if you please," said Karp, slowly turning toward the barn in the back of the yard. He opened a low gate which led to the beehives, and, letting the master walk through it, and closing it, he walked up to Ignát, and resumed his interrupted work.

XV.

NEKHLYÚDOV bent his head, and passed through the low gate underneath the shady shed to the apiary, which was back of the yard. The small space, surrounded by straw and a wicker fence which admitted the sunlight, where stood symmetrically arranged the beehives, covered with small boards, and surrounded by golden bees circling noisily about them, was all bathed in the hot, brilliant rays of the June sun.

A well-trodden path led from the gate through the middle of the apiary to a wooden-roofed cross with a brass-foil image upon it, which shone glaringly in the sun. A few stately linden-trees, which towered with their curly tops above the straw thatch of the neighbouring yard, rustled their fresh dark green foliage almost inaudibly, on account of the buzzing of the bees. All the shadows from the roofed fence, from the lindens, and from the beehives that were covered with boards, fell black and short upon the small, wiry grass that sprouted between the hives.

The small, bent form of an old man, with his uncovered gray, and partly bald, head shining in the sun, was seen near the door of a newly thatched, moss-calked plank building, which was situated between the lindens. Upon hearing the creaking of the gate, the old man turned around and, wiping off his perspiring, sunburnt face with the skirt of his shirt, and smiling gently and joyfully, came to meet the master.

The apiary was so cosy, so pleasant, so quiet, and so

sunlit; the face of the gray-haired old man, with the abundant ray-like wrinkles about his eyes, in his wide shoes over his bare feet, who, waddling along and smiling good-naturedly and contentedly, welcomed the master in his exclusive possessions, was so simple-hearted and kind, that Nekhlyúdov immediately forgot the heavy impressions of the morning, and his favourite dream rose up before him. He saw all his peasants just as rich and good-natured as old Dutlóv, and all smiled kindly and joyously at him, because they owed to him alone all their wealth and happiness.

"Will you not have a net, your Grace? The bees are angry now, and they sting," said the old man, taking down from the fence a dirty linen bag fragrant with honey, which was sewed to a bark hoop, and offering it to the master. "The bees know me, and do not sting me," he added, with a gentle smile, which hardly ever left his handsome, sunburnt face.

"Then I shall not need it, either. Well, are they swarming already?" asked Nekhlyúdov, also smiling, though he knew not why.

"They are swarming, Father Dmítri Nikoláevich," answered the old man, wishing to express his especial kindness by calling his master by his name and patronymic, "but they have just begun to do it properly. It has been a cold spring, you know."

"I have read in a book," began Nekhlyúdov, warding off a bee that had lost itself in his hair, and was buzzing over his very ear, "that when the combs are placed straight on little bars, the bees begin to swarm earlier. For this purpose they make hives out of boards — with cross-bea— "

"Please do not wave your hand, it will make it only worse," said the old man. "Had I not better give you the net?"

Nekhlyúdov was experiencing pain, but a certain child-

ish conceit prevented him from acknowledging it; he again refused the net, and continued to tell the old man about the construction of beehives, of which he had read in the "Maison Rustique," and in which the bees, according to his opinion, would swarm twice as much; but a bee stung his neck, and he stopped confused in the middle of his argument.

"That is so, Father Dmítri Nikoláevich," said the old man, glancing at the master with fatherly condescension, "they write so in books. But they may write so maliciously. 'Let him do,' they probably say, 'as we write, and we will have the laugh on him.' I believe that is possible! For how are you going to teach the bees where to build their combs? They fix them in the hollow blocks as they please, sometimes crossways, and at others straight. Look here, if you please," he added, uncorking one of the nearest blocks, and looking through the opening, which was covered with buzzing and creeping bees along the crooked combs. "Now here, these young ones, they have their mind on a queen bee, but they build the comb straightways and aslant, just as it fits best into the block," said the old man, obviously carried away by his favourite subject, and not noticing the master's condition. "They are coming heavily laden to-day, it is a warm day, and everything can be seen," he added, corking up the hive, and crushing a creeping bee with a rag, and then brushing off with his coarse hand a few bees from his wrinkled brow. The bees did not sting him. But Nekhlyúdov could no longer repress his desire to run out of the apiary; the bees had stung him in three places, and they were buzzing on all sides about his head and neck.

"Have you many hives?" he asked, retreating to the gate.

"As many as God has given," answered Dutlóv, smiling. "One must not count them, father! the bees do

not like that. Now, your Grace, I wanted to ask you," he continued, pointing to thin hives that stood near the fence, "in regard to Ósip, the nurse's husband. Could you not tell him to stop it? It is mean to act thus to a neighbour of your own village."

"What is mean? — But they do sting me!" answered the master, taking hold of the latch of the gate.

"Every year he lets out his bees against my young ones. They ought to have a chance to improve, but somebody else's bees steal their wax, and do other damage," said the old man, without noticing the master's grimaces.

"All right, later, directly," said Nekhlyúdov, and, unable to stand the pain any longer, he rushed out of the gate, defending himself with both hands.

"Rub it in with dirt; it will pass," said the old man, following the master into the yard. The master rubbed with dirt the place where he had been stung, blushingly looked at Karp and Ignát, who did not see him, and frowned angrily.

XVI.

"I WANTED to ask your Grace about my children," said the old man, accidentally or purposely paying no attention to the master's angry look.

"What?"

"Thank the Lord, we are well off for horses, and we have a hired man, so there will be no trouble about the manorial dues."

"What of it?"

"If you would be kind enough to let my sons substitute money payment for their manorial labour, Ilyúshka and Ignát would take out three tróykas to do some teaming all summer. They may be able to earn something."

"Where will they go?"

"Wherever it may be," replied Ilyúshka, who had in the meantime tied the horses under the shed, and had come up to his father. "The Kadmá boys took eight tróykas out to Rómen, and they made a good living, and brought back home thirty roubles for each tróyka; and they say fodder is cheap in Odessa."

"It is precisely this that I wanted to talk to you about," said the master, turning to the old man, and trying to introduce the discussion about the farm as deftly as possible. "Tell me, if you please, is it more profitable to do hauling than attend to a farm?"

"No end more profitable, your Grace!" again interrupted Ilyá, boldly shaking his hair. "There is no fodder at home to feed the horses with."

"Well, and how much do you expect to earn in a summer?"

"In the spring, when fodder was dreadfully expensive, we travelled to Kíev with goods; in Kursk we again took a load of grits for Moscow, and we made our living, the horses had enough to eat, and I brought fifteen roubles home."

"It is not a disgrace to have an honest trade," said the master, again turning to the old man, "but it seems to me one might find another occupation; besides, it is a kind of work where a young fellow travels about, sees all kinds of people, and gets easily spoilt," he said, repeating Karp's words.

"What are we peasants to take up, if not hauling?" answered the old man, with his gentle smile. "If you have a good job at teaming, you yourself have enough to eat, and so have the horses. And as to spoiling, thank the Lord, they are not hauling the first year; and I myself have done teaming, and have never seen anything bad, nothing but good."

"There are many things you might take up at home: land and meadows —"

"How can we, your Grace?" Ilyúshka interrupted him with animation. "We were born for this; we know all about it; the business is adapted to us, and we like it very much, your Grace, and there is nothing like teaming for us fellows."

"Your Grace, will you do us the honour to walk into the hut? You have not yet seen our new house," said the old man, bowing low, and winking to his son. Ilyúshka ran at full speed into the hut, and Nekhlyúdov followed him, with the old man.

XVII.

When they entered the hut, the old man bowed again, wiped off the bench in the front corner with the flap of his coat, and, smiling, asked:

"What may we serve to you, your Grace?"

The hut was white (with a chimney), spacious, and had both hanging and bench beds. The fresh aspen-wood beams, between which the moss-calking had just begun to fade, had not yet turned black; the new benches and beds had not yet become smooth, and the floor was not yet stamped down.

A young, haggard peasant woman, with an oval, pensive face, Ilyá's wife, was sitting on the bench-bed, and rocking with her foot a cradle that hung down from the ceiling by a long pole. In the cradle a suckling babe lay stretched out, and slept, barely breathing, and closing its eyes. Another, a plump, red-cheeked woman, Karp's wife, stood, with her sunburnt arms bared above the elbows, near the oven, and cut onions into a wooden bowl. A third, a pockmarked, pregnant woman, stood at the oven, shielding herself with her sleeve. The hut was hot, not only from the sun, but from the oven also, and was fragrant with freshly baked bread. From the hanging beds the flaxen heads of two boys and a girl, who had climbed there in expectation of dinner, looked down with curiosity at the master.

Nekhlyúdov was happy to see this well-being; but, at the same time, he felt embarrassed before these women

and children who gazed at him. He sat down on the bench, blushing.

"Give me a piece of warm bread, I like it," he said, and blushed even more.

Karp's wife cut off a big slice of bread, and handed it to the master on a plate. Nekhlyúdov was silent, not knowing what to say; the women were silent, too; the old man smiled gently.

"Really, what am I ashamed of? I am acting as though I were guilty of something," thought Nekhlyúdov. "Why should I not make the proposition about the farm to him? How foolish!" But still he kept silent.

"Well, Father Dmítri Nikoláevich, what will your order be about the boys?" said the old man.

"I should advise you not to send them away, but to find work for them here," suddenly spoke Nekhlyúdov, taking courage. "Do you know what I have thought out for you? Buy in partnership with me a young grove in the Crown forest, and fields —"

"How, your Grace? Where shall I get the money for it?" he interrupted the master.

"A small grove, for about two hundred roubles," remarked Nekhlyúdov.

The old man smiled angrily.

"It would not hurt to buy it if I had the money," he said.

"Do you mean to tell me you have not that amount?" said the master, reproachfully.

"Oh, your Grace!" answered the old man, in a sorrowful voice, looking at the door. "I have enough to do to feed the family, and it is not for me to buy groves."

"But you have money, and why should it lie idle?" insisted Nekhlyúdov.

The old man became greatly agitated; his eyes flashed, he began to shrug his shoulders.

"It may be evil people have told you something about

me," he spoke in a trembling voice, "but, as you believe in God," he said, becoming more and more animated, and turning his eyes to the image, "may my eyes burst, may I go through the floor, if I have anything outside of the fifteen roubles which Ilyúshka has brought me, and I must pay the capitation tax, and, you know yourself, I have just built a new hut —"

"All right, all right!" said the master, rising from the bench. "Good-bye, people!"

XVIII.

"My God! My God!" thought Nekhlyúdov, making his way with long strides to the house through the shady avenues of the weed-grown garden, and absent-mindedly tearing off leaves and branches on his way. "Is it possible all my dreams of the aims and duties of my life have been absurd? Why do I feel so oppressed and melancholy, as though I were dissatisfied with myself, whereas I had imagined that the moment I entered on the path, I would continually experience that fulness of a morally satisfied feeling which I had experienced when these thoughts came to me for the first time?"

He transferred himself, in imagination, with extraordinary vividness and clearness, a year back, to that blissful moment.

He had risen early in the morning before everybody in the house, painfully agitated by some secret, inexpressible impulses of youth; had aimlessly walked into the garden, thence into the forest; and, amidst the strong, luscious, but calm Nature of a May day, he had long wandered alone, without thought, suffering from an excess of some feeling, and unable to find an expression for it.

His youthful imagination, full of the charm of the unknown, represented to him the voluptuous image of a woman, and it seemed to him that this was the unexpressed desire. But another higher feeling said to him, "Not this," and compelled him to seek something else. Then again, his vivid imagination, rising higher and higher, into the sphere of abstractions, opened up to him,

as he thought, the laws of being, and he dwelt with proud delight upon these thoughts. And again a higher feeling said, "Not this," and again caused him to seek and be agitated.

Without ideas and desires, as always happens after an intensified activity, he lay down on his back under a tree, and began to gaze at the translucent morning clouds, which scudded above him over the deep, endless sky. Suddenly tears stood, without any cause, in his eyes, and, God knows how, there came to him the clear thought, which filled his soul, and which he seized with delight, — the thought that love and goodness were truth and happiness, and the only truth and possible happiness in the world. A higher feeling did not say, "Not this," and he arose, and began to verify his thought.

"It is, it is, yes!" he said to himself in ecstasy, measuring all his former convictions, all the phenomena of life, with the newly discovered and, as he thought, entirely new truth. "How stupid is all which I have known, and which I have believed in and loved," he said to himself. "Love, self-sacrifice, — these constitute the only true happiness which is independent of accident!" he repeated, smiling, and waving his hands. He applied this thought to life from every side, and he found its confirmation in life, and in the inner voice which told him, "It is this," and he experienced a novel feeling of joyful agitation and transport. "And thus, I must do good in order to be happy," he thought, and all his future was vividly pictured to him, not in the abstract, but in concrete form, in the shape of a landed proprietor.

He saw before him an immense field of action for his whole life, which he would henceforth devote to doing good, and in which he, consequently, would be happy. He would not have to look for a sphere of action: it was there; he had a direct duty, — he had peasants —

What refreshing and grateful labour his imagination

evoked: "To act upon this simple, receptive, uncorrupted class of people; to save them from poverty; to give them a sufficiency; to transmit to them the education which I enjoy through good fortune; to reform their vices which are the issue of ignorance and superstition; to develop their morality; to cause them to love goodness — What a brilliant and happy future! And I, who will be doing it all for my own happiness, shall enjoy their gratitude, and shall see how with every day I come nearer and nearer to the goal which I have set for myself. Enchanting future! How could I have failed to see it before?

"And besides," he thought at the same time, "who prevents my being happy in my love for a woman, in domestic life?"

And his youthful imagination painted a still more entrancing future to him.

"I and my wife, whom I love as no one in the world has ever loved, will always live amidst this tranquil, poetical country Nature, with our children, perhaps with an old aunt. We have a common love, the love for our children, and both of us know that our destiny is goodness. We help each other to walk toward this goal. I take general measures, furnish general and just assistance, start a farm, savings-banks, factories; but she, with her pretty little head, in a simple white dress, lifted over her dainty foot, walks through the mud to the peasant school, to the hospital, to some unfortunate peasant, who really does not deserve any aid, and everywhere she consoles and helps — The children and the old men and women worship her, and look upon her as upon an angel, a vision. Then she returns home, and she conceals from me that she has gone to see the unfortunate peasant, and has given him money; but I know everything, and I embrace her tightly, and firmly and tenderly kiss her charming eyes, her bashfully blushing cheeks, and her smiling ruddy lips —"

XIX.

"WHERE are these dreams?" now thought the youth, as he approached his house after his visits. "It is now more than a year that I have been seeking happiness upon this road, and what have I found? It is true, at times I feel that I might be satisfied with myself, but it is a kind of dry, mental satisfaction. Yes and no, I am simply dissatisfied with myself! I am dissatisfied because I have found no happiness here, and yet I wish, I passionately wish for happiness. I have not experienced enjoyment, and have already cut off from me everything which gives it. Why? For what? Who has been better off for it? My aunt was right when she said that it is easier to find happiness than to give it to others.

"Have my peasants grown richer? Have they been morally educated and developed? Not in the least. They are not better off, but I feel worse with every day. If I only saw any success in my undertaking, if I saw gratitude — but no, I see the perverted routine, vice, suspicion, helplessness.

"I am wasting in vain the best years of my life," he thought, and it occurred to him that his nurse had told him that his neighbours called him a "minor"; that there was no money left in his office; that the new threshing-machine, which he had invented, to the common delight of the peasants, only whistled but did not thresh, when it was for the first time set in motion in the threshing-barn, before a large audience; that from day to

day he might expect the arrival of the agrarian court in order to take an invoice of the estate, since he had allowed payments on the mortgage to lapse, in his preoccupation with all kinds of new farm undertakings.

And suddenly, just as vividly as before, came to him the picture of his walk through the forest, and the dream of a country life; and just as vividly stood before him his student room in Moscow, in which he used to stay up late at night, by one candle, with his classmate and adored sixteen-year-old friend. They read and recited for hours in succession some tiresome notes of civil law, and, after finishing them, sent for supper, pooled on a bottle of champagne, and talked of the future that was in store for them. How differently the future had presented itself to a young student! Then the future was full of enjoyment, of varied activities, of splendid successes, and incontestably led both of them to the highest good in the world, as it then was understood by them, — to fame!

"He is walking, and rapidly walking, on that road," thought Nekhlyúdov of his friend, "and I — "

At this time he had arrived at the entrance of the house, where ten or more peasants and domestics stood, waiting for the master with all kinds of requests, and he had to turn from his dreams to the reality before him.

Here was a ragged, dishevelled, and blood-stained peasant woman who complained in tears of her father-in-law, who, she said, wanted to kill her; here were two brothers who had been for two years quarrelling about the division of their farm, and who looked upon each other with desperate malice; here was also an unshaven, gray-haired servant, with hands quivering from intoxication, whom his son, the gardener, had brought to the master, to complain of his dissolute conduct; here was a peasant who had driven his wife out of the house because she had not worked all the spring; here was also that sick woman, his wife, who sat, sobbing and saying nothing, on the

grass near the entrance, and displayed her inflamed, swollen leg, carelessly wrapped in a dirty rag —

Nekhlyúdov listened to all requests and complaints, and he gave his advice to some, and settled the quarrels or made promises to others. He experienced a certain mixed feeling of weariness, shame, helplessness, and remorse, and walked to his room.

XX.

In the small room which Nekhlyúdov occupied, stood an old leather divan studded with brass nails, several chairs of the same description, an open antiquated card-table, with incrustations, indentations, and a brass rim, on which lay papers, and an antiquated, yellow, open English grand, with worn, narrow keys. Between the windows hung a large mirror in an old gilt carved frame. On the floor, near the table, lay stacks of papers, books, and accounts. The room bore altogether a disorderly aspect, and was devoid of character; and this living disorder formed a sharp contrast to the affected, old-fashioned, aristocratic arrangement of the other rooms of the large house.

Upon entering the room Nekhlyúdov angrily threw his hat upon the table, and sat down on a chair which stood in front of the grand, and crossed his legs and dropped his head.

"Well, will you have your breakfast, your Grace?" said, upon entering the room, a tall, haggard, wrinkled old woman, in cap, large kerchief, and chintz dress.

Nekhlyúdov turned around to take a look at her, and kept silent for awhile, as though considering something.

"No, I do not care to, nurse," he said, and again became pensive.

The nurse angrily shook her head at him, and sighed.

"Oh, Dmítri Nikoláevich, why do you look so sad? There are greater sorrows, and they pass, — really they do — "

"But I am not sad. What makes you think so, Mother Malánya Finogénovna?" answered Nekhlyúdov, trying to smile.

"Yes, you are. Don't I see it?" the nurse began to speak with animation. "You are day in, day out, all alone. And you take everything to heart, and attend to everything yourself. You have even quit eating. Is this right? If you only went to visit the city, or your neighbours, — but this is an unheard-of thing. You are young, so why should you worry about everything? Forgive me, sir, I will sit down," continued the nurse, seating herself near the door. "You have been so indulgent with them, that nobody is afraid of you. Is this the way masters do? There is nothing good in it. You are ruining yourself, and the people are getting spoilt. You know, our peasants do not understand what you are doing for them, really they don't. Why do you not go to see your aunty; she wrote you the truth — " the nurse admonished him.

Nekhlyúdov kept growing more and more despondent. His right hand, which was resting on his knee, fell flaccidly upon the keys. They gave forth a chord, a second, a third — Nekhlyúdov moved up, drew his other hand from his pocket, and began to play. The chords which he took were sometimes unprepared, and not always correct; they were often common enough to be trite, and did not display the least musical talent; but this occupation afforded him a certain indefinable melancholy pleasure.

At every change of harmony, he waited in breathless expectancy what would come out of it, and, when something came, his imagination dimly supplied what was lacking. It seemed to him that he heard hundreds of melodies: a chorus and an orchestra, in conformity with his harmony.

But he derived his chief pleasure from the intensified

activity of his imagination, which at that time brought up before him, disconnectedly and fragmentarily, but with wonderful clearness, the most varied, mixed, and absurd images and pictures from the past and future.

Now he saw the bloated form of Davýdka the White timidly blinking with his white eyelashes at the sight of his mother's black, venous fist; his curved back, and immense hands covered with white hair, answering to all tortures and deprivations with patience and submission to fate.

Then he saw the nimble nurse, emboldened through her association with the manor, and he imagined her visiting the villages and preaching to the peasants that they must conceal their money from the proprietors; and he unconsciously repeated to himself, "Yes, it is necessary to conceal the money from the proprietors!"

Then suddenly presented itself to him the blonde head of his future wife, for some reason in tears, and in great anguish leaning upon his shoulder.

Then he saw Churís's kindly blue eyes, tenderly looking down upon his only thick-bellied little son. Yes, he saw in him not only a son, but a helper and saviour. "This is love!" he whispered.

Then he recalled Yukhvánka's mother, and the expression of long-suffering and forgiveness which he had noticed upon her aged face, in spite of her prominent tooth and abhorrent features. "No doubt, I am the first one to have noticed this, in the seventy years of her life," he thought; and he whispered, "It is strange," and continued unconsciously to run his fingers over the keys and to listen to the sounds they made.

Then he vividly recalled his flight from the apiary, and the expression of the faces of Ignát and Karp, who evidently wanted to laugh, but pretended that they did not see him.

He blushed, and involuntarily looked at his nurse, who

remained sitting at the door, silently gazing at him, and now and then shaking her gray hair.

Suddenly there came to him the tróyka of sweaty horses, and Ilyúshka's handsome and strong figure, with his blond curls, beaming, narrow blue eyes, ruddy cheeks, and light-coloured down just beginning to cover his lip and chin. He remembered how Ilyúshka was afraid he would not be permitted to go teaming, and how warmly he defended his cause, which he liked so well. And he saw a gray, misty morning, a slippery highway, and a long row of heavily laden, mat-covered three-horse wagons, marked with big black letters. The stout-legged, well-fed horses, jingling their bells, bending their backs, and tugging at their traces, pulled evenly up-hill, straining their legs so that the sponges might catch on the slippery road. Down-hill, past the train of wagons, came dashing the stage, tinkling its little bells, which reëchoed far into the large forest that extended on both sides of the road.

"Whew!" shouted, in a childish voice, the first driver, with a tin label on his lambskin cap, raising his whip above his head.

Karp, with his red beard and gloomy look, was striding heavily in his huge boots beside the front wheel of the first wagon. From the second wagon stuck out the handsome head of Ilyúshka, who, at the early dawn, was making himself snug and warm under the front mat. Three tróykas, laden with portmanteaus, dashed by, with rumbling wheels, jingling bells, and shouts. Ilyúshka again hid his handsome head under the mat, and fell asleep.

Now it was a clear, warm evening. The plank gate creaked for the tired teams that were crowded in front of the tavern, and the tall, mat-covered wagons, jolting over the board that lay in the gate entrance, disappeared one after another under the spacious sheds.

Ilyúshka merrily greeted the fair-complexioned, broad-

chested landlady, who asked, "Do you come far? And will you have a good supper?" looking with pleasure at the handsome lad, with his sparkling, kindly eyes.

Now, having unharnessed the horses, he went into the close hut crowded with people, made the sign of the cross, sat down at a full wooden bowl, and chatted merrily with the landlady and his companions.

And then his bed was under the starry heaven, which was visible from the shed, and upon the fragrant hay, near his horses which, stamping and snorting, rummaged through the fodder in the wooden cribs. He walked up to the hay, turned to the east, and, crossing himself some thirty times in succession, over his broad, powerful breast, and shaking his bright curls, he said the Lord's Prayer, and repeated some twenty times the "Kyrie eleison," and, wrapping his cloak around body and head, slept the sound, careless sleep of a strong, healthy man.

And he saw in his dream the city of Kíev, with its saints and throngs of pilgrims; Rómen, with its merchants and merchandise; and Odessa and the endless blue sea with its white sails; and the city of Constantinople, with its golden houses, and white-breasted, black-browed Turkish maidens; and he flew there, rising on some invisible pinions. He flew freely and easily, farther and farther, and saw below him golden cities bathed in bright splendour, and the blue heaven with its pure stars, and the blue sea with its white sails, and he felt a joy and pleasure in flying ever farther and farther —

"Glorious!" Nekhlyúdov whispered to himself, and the thought came to him, "Why am I not Ilyúshka?"

THE COSSACKS

A Novel of the Caucasus

1852

THE COSSACKS

A Novel of the Caucasus

I.

EVERYTHING was quiet in Moscow. In a few isolated places could be heard the squeak of wheels over the wintry street. There were no lights in the windows, and the lamps were extinguished. From the churches rang out the sounds of bells which, billowing over the sleepy city, reminded one of morning.

The streets were empty. Here and there a night cabman caused the sand and snow to become mixed under the narrow runners of his sleigh, and, betaking himself to the opposite corner, fell asleep, waiting for a passenger. An old woman walked by, on her way to church, where, reflected from the gold foils of the holy images, burnt with a red light a few unsymmetrically placed wax tapers. Working people were rising after the long winter night, and walking to work.

But for gentlemen it was still evening.

In one of the windows of Chevalier's establishment there peeped, contrary to law, a light through the closed shutter. At the entrance stood a carriage, a sleigh, and cabs, closely pressed together, with their backs to the curbstone. Here was also a stage tróyka. The janitor,

wrapped in his furs and crouching, seemed to be hiding around the corner of the house.

"What makes them keep up this unending prattle?" thought the lackey with the haggard face, who was sitting in the antechamber. "And that, too, when I am keeping watch!"

In the adjoining, brightly illuminated room could be heard the voices of three young men, who were dining. They were sitting at a table, upon which stood the remnants of a supper and wine. One of them, a small, clean-looking, haggard, and homely fellow was seated and looking with kindly, though wearied, eyes at him who was to depart. Another, a tall man, was reclining near the table, that was covered with empty bottles, and playing with his watch-key. A third, in a new short fur coat, paced the room, now and then stopped to crack an almond between his fairly fat and powerful fingers, with their manicured nails, and smiled for some reason or other. His eyes and face were flushed. He spoke with ardour and in gestures; but it was evident that he could not find words, and that all the words which occurred to him appeared insufficient to express everything that was upon his heart. He was continually smiling.

"Now I may say everything!" said the departing man. "I do not mean to justify myself, but I should like to have you understand me as I understand myself, and not as the malicious regard this affair. You say that I am guilty toward her," he turned to the one who looked upon him with kindly eyes.

"Yes, guilty," answered the short, homely fellow, and there seemed to be even more kindness and weariness expressed in his glance.

"I know why you say so," answered the departing man. "To be loved is, in your opinion, just such happiness as to love, and it is sufficient for a whole life, if you once obtain it."

"Yes, quite sufficient, my dear! More than enough," confirmed the short, homely fellow, opening and closing his eyes.

"But why should one not love?" said the departing man, falling into a reverie, and looking at his companion, as though with compassion. "Why not love? Don't feel like loving — No, to be loved is a misfortune when you feel that you are guilty because you are not returning the love, nor ever can return it. O Lord!" and he waved his hand. "If all this had happened in a sensible way! But no, it is all topsyturvy, not according to our ways, but in its own peculiar manner. I feel as though I had stolen that sentiment. And you think the same way; do not deny it, you certainly must think that way. And would you believe it? Of all the mean and stupid acts that I have managed to commit in my life, this is the only one for which I do not feel, nor ever can feel, remorse. Neither in the beginning, nor later, have I lied to myself, nor to her. I imagined that at last I had fallen in love with her; and then I saw that it was an involuntary lie, that it was impossible thus to love, and I was unable to go any farther; but she did go farther. Am I to be blamed because I could not? What could I do?"

"Well, now it is all ended!" said his friend, lighting a cigar in order to dispel sleep. "There is this much: you have not loved yet, and you do not know what love is."

The one who wore the short fur coat was on the point of saying something, and he grasped his head with both his hands. But he did not express what he intended to say.

"I have not loved! Yes, it is true, I have not loved. I certainly desire to love, and there is nothing stronger than my desire! And then again, is there such a love? There always remains something unfinished. Well, what

is the use of speaking? I have blundered and blundered in my life. But now all is ended, you are right. And I feel that a new life is to begin."

"In which you will blunder again," said the one who was lying on the sofa and playing with his watch-key; but the departing man did not hear him.

"I am both sad and happy to leave," he continued. "Why sad? I do not know."

And the departing man began to speak of himself, without noticing that the others were not as much interested in this as he. Man is never such an egotist as in the moment of sentimental transport. It seems to him then that there is nothing in the world more beautiful and interesting than he himself.

"Dmítri Andréevich, the driver refuses to wait!" said, upon entering, a young manorial servant, in a fur coat, and wrapped in a scarf. "The horses have been standing since twelve o'clock, and now it is four."

Dmítri Andréevich looked at his Vanyúsha. In his scarf, felt boots, and sleepy face he heard the voice of another life which called him, — a life of labour, privation, and activity.

"That is so, good-bye!" he said, searching for the unhooked eye of his fur coat.

In spite of the advice of his friends to give the driver a *pourboire*, he donned his cap, and stood in the middle of the room. They kissed once, twice, then stopped, and kissed for the third time. The one who was in the short fur coat walked up to the table, emptied a beaker that was standing upon it, took the hand of the short, homely fellow, and blushed.

"No, I will say it — I ought to be and can be frank with you, because I love you — You love her? I always thought so — yes?"

"Yes," answered his friend, smiling more gently still.

"And maybe —"

"Please, I have been ordered to put out the lights," said the sleepy lackey who had heard the last conversation, and was ruminating why it was gentlemen eternally talked of one and the same thing. "Against whom shall the bill be charged? Against you?" he added, turning to the tall gentleman, knowing in advance who it would be.

"Against me," said the tall man. "How much is it?"

"Twenty-six roubles."

The tall man mused for awhile, but said nothing, and placed the bill in his pocket.

The other two continued their conversation.

"Good-bye, you are a fine fellow!" said the short, homely man with the gentle eyes.

Tears stood in the eyes of both. They walked out to the entrance.

"Oh, yes!" said the departing man, blushing, and turning to the tall gentleman. "You will fix the bill with Chevalier, and then write to me about it."

"All right, all right," said the tall gentleman, putting on his gloves. "How I envy you!" he added, quite unexpectedly, as they walked out to the entrance.

The departing man seated himself in his sleigh, wrapped himself in his fur coat, and said, "Well, we will start," and moved in his seat to give a place to him who had said that he envied him; his voice was trembling.

The friend who saw him off said, "Good-bye, Mítya, may God grant you —" He did not wish anything but that he should leave as soon as possible, and so he could not finish what it was he wished him.

They were silent. Again somebody said, "Good-bye!"

Somebody said, "Go!" and the driver started his horses.

"Elizár, the carriage!" shouted one of these who had seen him off.

The cabmen and the coachman stirred, called to their

horses, and pulled the reins. The frozen sleigh squeaked over the snow.

"This Olénin is a fine fellow," said one of the two. "But what pleasure is there in going to the Caucasus, and as a yunker[1] at that? I would not do it for anything. Will you dine at the club to-morrow?"

"Yes."

And the friends parted.

The departing man felt warm, even hot, in his fur coat. He sat down in the bed of the sleigh and stretched himself; and the shaggy stage-horses flew from one dark street into another, past houses he had never seen. It appeared to Olénin that only those who departed travelled through these streets. Around him it was dark, speechless, gloomy, and his soul was full of recollections, love, regrets, and of pleasurable tears that choked him.

[1] A non-commissioned officer of the nobility.

II.

"I LOVE! I love them very much! They are fine! It is good!" he repeated, and he wanted to weep. But he was not quite sure why he wanted to weep, who were fine, and whom he loved.

He now gazed at some house, and wondered why it was built in such a strange manner; and again he wondered why the driver and Vanyúsha, who were such strangers to him, were so close to him and jolted and shook simultaneously with him from the sudden jerks of the side horses who tugged at the frozen traces, and he repeated, "They are fine, I love them," and once he even said, "There she goes! Superb!" and he wondered why he said that, and asked himself, "Am I drunk?"

It is true nearly two bottles of wine had fallen to his share, but it was not the wine alone that had produced that effect upon Olénin. He thought of what appeared to him to be the intimate words of friendship which had timidly, as though accidentally, been told him at his departure. He thought of the pressure of the hands, of the glances, the silence, and the voice of him who said "Good-bye, Mítya!" when he was seated in the sleigh. He thought of his own determined frankness. And all this touched him.

Before his departure, not only his friends and his relatives, not only indifferent people, but even those who were unsympathetic, or ill-wishing — all seemed to have been in league to love him better, and to forgive him, as before confession or death.

"Maybe I shall not return from the Caucasus," he thought. And he thought that he loved his friends, and somebody else. And he was sorry for himself. But it was not the love for his friends that touched him and elevated his soul, so that he was unable to restrain those meaningless words that issued unbidden from his mouth, — nor was it the love for a woman (he had never loved) that had brought him to this state. It was the love of self, the ardent, hopeful, young love of everything good in his soul (it seemed to him that it was filled with nothing but that which was good), that caused him to weep and mutter incoherent words.

Olénin was a young man who had never finished his university course; who had never served (he was merely a supernumerary in some government office); who had spent half his fortune; and who until his twenty-fourth year had chosen no career for himself, and had never done anything. He was what is called a "young man" in Moscow society.

At eighteen years of age Olénin had been as free as only were rich young Russians of the forties who at an early age were left as orphans. He knew neither physical nor moral fetters; he could do everything, and he wanted nothing, and nothing bound him. He had neither family, nor country, nor faith, nor want. He believed in nothing, and acknowledged nothing. Yet, though he acknowledged nothing, he was not a gloomy, *blasé*, and meditative youth, but, on the contrary, was easily carried away.

He had decided that there was no love, and yet the presence of a young and beautiful woman made him breathless with delight. He had long known that honours and distinction were nonsense, but he experienced an involuntary pleasure when Prince Sérgi walked up to him at a ball, and addressed him graciously.

He allowed himself to be carried away by his raptures

only so long as they did not bind him. The moment he devoted himself to one subject, and felt the approach of labour and struggles, — the petty struggles with life, — he instinctively hastened to tear himself away from his sentiment or from affairs, and to regain his liberty. Thus he had begun his worldly life, his service, farming, music, to which he thought at one time of devoting himself, and even love of women, in which he did not believe.

He pondered how to expend all that strength of youth, which comes to man only once in a lifetime, — whether on art, on science, on love for a woman, or on practical life; he wished to employ not the power of his mind, heart, and education, but that unrepeated impulse, that power, granted to man but once, to make of himself everything he wishes, and, as he thinks, everything of the world he may wish.

It is true there are people who lack this impulse, and who, upon entering life, put on the first yoke they find, and continue to work honestly in it until the end of their days. But Olénin was too vividly conscious of the presence of that all-powerful god of youth, of that ability to transform himself into one desire and one thought, of the ability to wish and do, to throw himself headlong into a bottomless abyss, not knowing why, or wherefore. He carried this consciousness with him, was proud of it, and, without knowing it, was happy in its possession.

So far he had loved himself only, nor could he help loving himself, because he expected nothing but good things of himself, and had not yet been disappointed in himself. At his departure from Moscow he was in that happy, youthful frame of mind when a young man, having become conscious of his previous mistakes, suddenly says to himself that the past was wrong, that everything that preceded was accidental and insignificant, that he had not heretofore tried to live decently, but that now, with his departure from Moscow, a new life would

begin, in which there would be none of those blunders, and no remorse, and in which he certainly would be happy.

When one sets out for a long journey, the imagination at the first two stages remains in the place whence one has set out; then, suddenly, on the first morning which one passes on the road, one is transferred to the goal of the journey, and there builds castles of the future. The same happened to Olénin.

As he drove out of the city, and gazed at the snow-covered fields, he rejoiced at being all alone in their midst, wrapped himself in his fur coat, let himself down in the bed of the sleigh, became calm, and dozed off. His leave-taking with his friends unstrung him, and he recalled his whole last winter which he had passed in Moscow; and pictures of that past, interrupted by indistinct thoughts and reproaches, began to rise unbidden before his imagination.

He recalled the friend who had seen him off, and his relations with the maiden of whom they had been speaking. That girl was rich. "How could he have loved her, when he knew that she was in love with me?" he thought, and evil suspicions rose in his mind. "When you come to think of it, there is much dishonesty in people. But why have I not yet loved?" the question occurred to him. "Everybody tells me that I have not yet loved. Am I really a moral monster?"

And he began to recall the subjects of his temporary transports. He recalled the first experience of his worldly life, and the sister of one of his friends, with whom he used to pass evenings at the table with a lamp upon it that cast a light upon her slender fingers at work, and upon the lower part of her fair oval face, and he remembered those conversations that dragged along like a child's game called "the fox is alive," and the general awkwardness, and the embarrassment, and the continuous

feeling of provocation at this strained relation. A voice told him, "It is not that, not that," and it really turned out that way.

Then he recalled the ball and the mazurka with beautiful D——. "How I was in love that night, and how happy I was! And how pained and mortified I was when I awoke the next morning, and felt that I was free! Why does not love come? and bind my hands and feet?" he thought. "No, there is no love! My neighbour, who told me, and Dubróvin, and the marshal of nobility, that she loved the stars, was not that either."

And he thought of his farming activity in the country, and found no pleasant incident upon which to rest his memory. "Will they think for a long time of my departure?" it suddenly occurred to him. But whom did he mean by "they"? He did not know, and immediately a thought came to him that made him frown and utter indistinct sounds: it was the recollection of M. Capelle and the 678 roubles which he owed his tailor; and he recalled the words with which he begged the tailor to wait another year, and the expression of amazement and of submission to fate which appeared on the tailor's countenance.

"O Lord, Lord!" he repeated, blinking, and trying to dispel the unbearable thought. "And yet, she loved me, in spite of it," he thought of the maiden of whom they had been speaking at the leave-taking. "If I married her, I should have no debts, but now I still owe Vasílev."

And he recalled the last evening which he had passed at the gaming-table with Vasílev in the club, whither he had driven straight from her house; and he recalled his humiliating requests to continue playing, and Vasílev's cold refusals. "One year of strict economy, and all that will be paid, and the devil take them——" But in spite of his self-assurance, he again started to count up his

debts, and to consider when they would fall due, or when he should be able to pay them.

"Why, I owe Morelle, also, in addition to Chevalier," he suddenly thought, and the whole night in which he had run up such a bill stood before him. It was a carousal with the gipsies, which was given by some visitors from St. Petersburg, Sáshka B——, aid-de-camp, and Prince D——, and that distinguished old gentleman. "What makes those gentlemen so satisfied with themselves?" he thought. "And on what ground do they form a separate circle to which others ought to feel themselves flattered to be admitted? Because they are aids-de-camp? It is really terrible what stupid and mean people they consider others to be! However, I showed them that I did not have the least desire to get better acquainted with them. Still, I think, Manager Andréy would be very much puzzled if he heard me saying 'thou' to such a gentleman as Sáshka B——, colonel and aid-de-camp — And nobody drank as much as I on that evening; I taught the gipsies a new song, and everybody listened. Though I have done many a foolish thing, I am a nice, a very nice young man," he thought.

The morning found Olénin at the third stage. He drank tea, transferred with Vanyúsha's aid the bundles and portmanteaus, and sat down gravely, precisely, and accurately among them, knowing where each thing was, — where the money was and how much of it; where the passport, and the stage permit, and the highway receipt were, — and all that seemed to him so practically arranged that he was happy, and the distant journey presented itself to him as a protracted outing.

During the morning and midday he was lost in arithmetical calculations: how many versts he had behind him; how many were left to the next station; how many to the nearest town; to dinner, to tea, to Stavrópol; and what part of the whole road he had behind him. At the

same time he calculated how much money he had; how much there would be left; how much he needed to acquit himself of all his debts; and what part of his whole income he would spend in a month. In the evening, after having had his tea, he figured out that to Stavrópol seven-elevenths of the whole road were left; his debts amounted to but seven months of strict economy, and to one-eighth of his fortune; and having calmed himself, he wrapped himself up, let himself down in the bed of the sleigh, and again fell asleep.

His imagination now was in the future, in the Caucasus. All his dreams of the future were connected with pictures of Amalát-bek,[1] Circassian maidens, mountains, avalanches, terrible torrents, and perils. All that presented itself in a dim and indistinct shape; but enticing glory and threatening death formed the chief interest of that future.

Now, with extraordinary valour and surprising strength, he killed and vanquished an endless number of mountaineers; now he was himself a mountaineer, and together with them defended his independence against the Russians. The moment he thought out the details, he found the old Moscow faces taking part in them. Sáshka B—— fought with the Russians, or mountaineers, against him. He knew not how, but even M. Capelle, the tailor, took part in the victor's triumph.

If he recalled his old humiliations, foibles, and mistakes in connection with this, that reminiscence gave him only pleasure. It was clear that there, amidst the mountains, torrents, Circassian maidens, and perils, these mistakes could not be repeated. Having once made that confession to himself, there was an end to them.

There was one, the most precious dream, which mingled in every thought of the young man about the future. This dream was woman. There, among the mountains,

[1] Character in a novel by Bestúzhev-Marlínski.

she presented herself to his imagination in the shape of a Circassian slave, with a slender figure, long braid, and submissive, deep eyes. He saw in the mountains a lonely cabin, and *her* on the threshold, waiting for him while he returned to her tired, covered with dust, blood, and glory; and he dreamed of her kisses, her shoulders, her sweet voice, her submissiveness. She was charming, but uneducated, wild, coarse.

In the long winter evenings he would begin to educate her. She was intelligent, quick-witted, gifted, and rapidly acquired all the necessary information. Why not? She might easily learn the languages, read the productions of French literature, and understand them. "Notre Dame de Paris," for example, would no doubt please her. She might even speak French. In the drawing-room she might possess more native dignity than a lady of the highest circles of society. She could sing, simply, powerfully, and passionately.

"Oh, what bosh!" he said to himself.

Just then they arrived at some station, and it was necessary to climb from one sleigh into another, and to give a *pourboire*. But he again searched with his imagination for the nonsense which he had left off, and again there stood before him Circassian maidens, glory, return to Russia, an aid-de-campship, a charming wife. "But there is no love!" he said to himself. "Honours are nonsense. And the six hundred and seventy-eight roubles? And the conquered territory which would give me more wealth than I should need for all my life? Indeed, it will not be well to make use of all that wealth by myself. I shall have to distribute it. But to whom? Six hundred and seventy-eight roubles to Capelle, and then we will see —"

And dim visions shrouded his thoughts, and only Vanyúsha's voice and a feeling of interrupted motion disturbed his sound, youthful sleep, and, without being

conscious of it, he crawled into another sleigh at the following station, and travelled on.

The next morning was the same, — the same stations, the same tea-drinking, the same cruppers of the horses in motion, the same short chats with Vanyúsha, the same indistinct dreams and the drowsiness in the evening, and the tired, sound, youthful sleep during the night.

III.

THE farther Olénin travelled from the centre of Russia, the more distant his memories seemed to him; and the nearer he approached the Caucasus, the happier he felt. "To go away for ever, and never to come back, and not to appear in society," it sometimes occurred to him. "The people that I see here are no people; no one knows me here, and not one of them can ever be in Moscow and in the society in which I moved, or find out anything about my past. And not one of that society will ever know what I was doing when I lived among those people."

And an entirely new feeling of freedom from his whole past seized him among the vulgar beings whom he met on the road, and whom he did not regard as people on the same level with his Moscow acquaintances. The coarser the people were, and the fewer the signs of civilization, the freer he felt himself.

Stavrópol, through which he passed, mortified him. The shop-signs, — nay, French signs, — the ladies in a carriage, the cabmen who stood in the square, the boulevard, and a gentleman in an overcoat and hat, who was strolling in the boulevard and glancing at the stranger, affected him painfully. "Maybe these people know some of my acquaintances," and he again recalled the club, the tailor, the cards, and society —

After Stavrópol, however, everything went satisfactorily: it was all wild and, besides, beautiful and warlike. And Olénin grew happier and happier. All the Cossacks,

drivers, and inspectors seemed to him to be simple creatures with whom he could make simple jokes, and chat, without stopping to consider to what class of society they belonged. They all belonged to the human race, which was unconsciously dear to Olénin, and they all were friendly to him.

As far back as the Land of the Don Army his sleigh had been exchanged for a cart, and beyond Stavrópol it grew so warm that Olénin travelled without a fur coat. It was spring, an unexpected, joyous spring for Olénin.

At night they could not leave the villages, and they said that in the evening it was dangerous to travel; Vanyúsha shuddered, and a loaded gun lay in the stage vehicle. Olénin felt happier still. At one station, the inspector told of a terrible murder that had lately happened on the road. They now and then met armed men.

"That is where it begins!" Olénin said to himself, and waited for the sight of the snow-capped mountains, about which he had been told so much. Once, toward evening, a Nogáy driver pointed with his whip at the mountains beyond the clouds. Olénin eagerly looked at them, but it was misty, and the clouds half-concealed the mountains. Olénin saw something gray, white, and fleecy, and, however much he tried, he could not find anything attractive in the view of the mountains, of which he had read and heard so much. He concluded that the mountains and the clouds looked precisely alike, and that the special beauty of the snow-capped mountains, of which he had been told so much, was just such a fiction as Bach's music, and the love for a woman, in neither of which he believed, and he ceased waiting for the mountains.

But on the following day, early in the morning, he was awakened by the dampness in his vehicle, and he indifferently turned his eyes to the right. It was a very clear morning. Suddenly he saw, some twenty

steps from him, as he thought at first, pure white masses, with their delicate contours and the fantastic and sharply defined outline of their summits, against the distant sky. And when he became aware of the great distance between him and the mountains and the sky, and of the immensity of the mountains, and when he felt the immeasurableness of that beauty, he was frightened, thinking that it was a vision, a dream. He shook himself, in order to be rid of his sleep. The mountains remained the same.

"What is this? What is it?" he asked the driver.

"The mountains," the Nogáy answered, with indifference.

"I myself have been looking at them for a long time," said Vanyúsha. "It is beautiful! They will not believe it at home!"

In the rapid motion of the vehicle over the even road, the mountains seemed to be running along the horizon, gleaming in the rising sun with their rosy summits. At first the mountains only surprised Olénin, but later they gave him pleasure. And later, as he gazed longer at this chain of snow-capped mountains, which were not connected with other black mountains, but rose directly from the steppe, he began by degrees to understand their full beauty, and to "feel" the mountains.

From that moment, everything he saw, everything he thought, everything he felt, assumed for him a new, severely majestic character, that of the mountains. All the Moscow reminiscences, his shame and remorse, all the trite dreams of the Caucasus, everything disappeared, and never returned again. "Now it has begun," a solemn voice said to him. And the road, and the distant line of the Térek, and the villages, and the people, all that appeared to him no longer a trifling matter.

He looked at the sky, and he thought of the mountains. He looked at himself, and at Vanyúsha, — and again the mountains. There, two Cossacks rode by, and

their muskets in cases evenly vibrated on their backs, and their horses intermingled their chestnut and gray légs, — and the mountains. Beyond the Térek was seen the smoke in a native village, — and the mountains.

The sun rose and glistened on the Térek beyond the reeds, — and the mountains. From the Cossack village came a native cart, and women, beautiful young women, walked, — and the mountains. "Abréks[1] race through the steppes, and I am travelling, and fear them not: I have a gun, and strength, and youth," — and the mountains.

[1] Mountaineer braves.

IV.

THE whole part of the Térek line, along which the Grebén Cossack villages are located, is about eighty versts long, and bears a uniform character, both as to topography and population. The Térek, which divides the Cossacks from the mountaineers, flows turbidly and rapidly, but now broadly and calmly, continually depositing the grayish sand on the low, reed-covered right bank, and washing away the steep, but not high, left shore with its roots of century oaks, rotting plane-trees, and young underbrush.

On the right bank are situated peaceful, but still restless, native villages; on the left bank lie the Cossack villages, at half a verst from the river, and at the distance of from seven to eight versts from each other. In former days the greater number of these villages were on the very shore; but the Térek deflected every year more and more to the north of the mountains, and undermined them, so that now only weed-grown old town locations, gardens, pear-trees, plum-trees and poplars, intertwined with blackberry-bushes and wild-growing grape-vines, may be seen in those places. Nobody lives there, and in the sand may be noticed the tracks of deer, boars, hares, and pheasants, who have taken a liking to these spots.

From Cossack village to village runs a road as straight as an arrow, cut through the woods. Along the road are placed cordons in which Cossacks are located; between the cordons sentinels are stationed in watch-towers. Only

Cossack troops quartered on a village.

a narrow strip of fertile woodland, about two thousand feet in width, forms the possession of the Cossacks.

To the north of them begin the sand-dunes of the Nogáy or Mozdók steppe, which extends far to the north and connects, God knows where, with the Trukhmén, the Astrakhán, and the Kirgíz-Kaysák steppes. To the south, beyond the Térek, are the Great Chechnyá, the Kochkalósov chain, the Black Mountains, another range, and finally the snow-capped mountains, which are just visible, but which have never been traversed by any one. In this fertile, wooded strip, rich in vegetation, has lived since time immemorial a warlike, handsome, and rich Russian population of dissenters, called the Grebén Cossacks.

Long, long ago, their ancestors, the dissenters, had run away from Russia and settled beyond the Térek, between the Chechéns on the Grebén, — the first range of wooded mountains of the Great Chechnyá. Living among the Chechéns, the Cossacks have intermarried with them, and have adopted the customs, manner of life, and habits of the mountaineers; but they have retained, in all their former purity, the Russian language and ancient faith.

There is still living a tradition among these Cossacks which tells that the Tsar Iván the Terrible came to the Térek, called the old men from the Grebén into his presence, gave them land on this side of the river, advised them to live in peace, and promised them not to disturb their independence, nor to compel them to change their faith.

Even now the Cossack families count their relationship with the Chechéns, and their love of freedom, indolence, pillage, and war form the chief features of their character. The influence of Russia finds its expression from its disadvantageous side in the elections, the removal of bells, and in the army which is stationed there or passes through.

A Cossack, by his natural inclination, hates less a warrior brave who has killed his brother, than a soldier who is stationed there to defend his village, but who has smoked up his cabin with tobacco. He respects the hostile mountaineer, but despises the soldier, who is a stranger to him, and an oppressor. A Russian peasant proper is to the Cossack a strange, wild, and contemptible creature, not different from the Little-Russian peddlers and immigrants whom he has seen, and whom he contemptuously designates as "fullers."

His dandyism consists in imitating the Chechén attire. He gets his best ammunition from the mountaineers, and his best horses are bought and stolen from them. A young Cossack brags of his knowledge of the Tartar language, and when he is carousing speaks in Tartar even to his brother Cossack. In spite of this, these Christian people, lost in a corner of the earth, and surrounded by semi-savage Mohammedan tribes and by soldiers, regard themselves as highly civilized, and consider none but Cossacks to be men; upon everybody else they look with contempt.

A Cossack passes the greater part of his life in the cordons, in expeditions, hunting, or fishing. He hardly ever works at home. His presence in the village is an exception, and then he carouses. The Cossacks all have wine of their own, and intoxication is not so much a common weakness of theirs, as a ceremony, the neglect of which would be considered an apostasy.

Upon woman a Cossack looks as an implement of his well-being. A maiden is permitted to take things easy; but a wife is compelled to work for him from youth to advanced old age; he looks upon woman with the Eastern conception of submissiveness and labour. In consequence of this view, a woman, whose physical and moral development is intensified, outwardly submits, but at the same time has, as generally in the East, an incom-

parably greater influence and weight in her domestic life than women have in the West. Her removal from public life, and her habit of doing man's heavy work, give her greater weight and power in her domestic life.

A Cossack, who considers it indecent to speak kindly or leisurely with his wife in the presence of strangers, involuntarily feels her superiority when he is left with her without witnesses. The whole house, all the property, all the farm, is acquired by her, and is maintained by her labour and care. Although he is firmly convinced that work is disgraceful for a Cossack, and becoming only to a Nogáy labourer and to a woman, he feels vaguely that everything he uses and calls his own is the result of this labour, and that it lies in the power of woman, of his mother and his wife, whom he regards as his slave, to deprive him of everything which he uses.

Besides this, the continuous heavy man's labour, and the cares that are put into her hands, have given the Grebén woman an unusually independent and manly character, and have developed to an astonishing degree her physical strength, sound common sense, determination, and firmness of character. The women are generally more intelligent, more developed and beautiful than the men. The beauty of a Grebén woman is particularly striking by its combination of the purest type of the Caucasian face with the broad and powerful build of the northern woman.

The Cossack women wear the Caucasian garb: the Tartar shirt, half-coat, and foot-gear; but they wrap their heads with a kerchief in the Russian fashion. The foppishness, cleanliness, and elegance of their attire, and the arrangement of their cabins, constitute a habit and necessity of their lives. In regard to men, the women, and especially the maidens, enjoy absolute freedom.

The village of Novomlín has been considered to be the root of the Grebén Cossacks. Here, more than elsewhere,

the customs of the old Grebéns have been preserved, and the women of this village have ever been famous for their beauty in the whole Caucasus. The Cossacks gain a subsistence from their vineyards and fruit-gardens, from their fields of melons and pumpkins, from fishing and hunting, from their fields of maize and millet, and from rapine.

The village of Novomlín is three versts distant from the Térek, from which it is separated by a dense forest. On one side of the road, which runs through the village, is the river; on the other are the green vineyards and gardens, and may be seen the sand-dunes of the Nogáy steppe. The village is surrounded by an earthen rampart and prickly hedge. One enters into and issues from the village through a tall gate, swinging on posts, with a small, reed-thatched roof, near which is placed, on a wooden gun-carriage, a monstrous cannon which has not been fired for a hundred years, and which had been at one time taken from the enemy by the Cossacks. A Cossack in uniform, sabre, and with his gun, sometimes stands sentinel at the gate, and just as often he is not there; sometimes he presents arms to a passing officer, and sometimes not.

Under the roof of the gate there is a white board with the following inscription in black letters: "Houses, 266; male souls, 897; female souls, 1,012." The houses of the Cossacks are all raised on posts, three feet or more from the ground, are neatly thatched with reeds, and have a ridge-piece. Though they are not all new, they are straight, with high porches of various shapes, and are not attached one to another, but are freely and picturesquely scattered along broad streets and lanes. In front of the bright, large windows of many cabins, tower above them dark green poplars, tender, pale-foliaged acacias with white fragrant flowers, boldly shining sunflowers, and twining pinks and grape-vines.

On the broad square are to be seen three little shops where may be found dry goods, pumpkin seeds, St. John's

bread, and cake; and behind a high enclosure, back of a row of old poplars, is visible, longer and taller than the rest, the house of the commander of the regiment, with double-winged windows. During week-days, particularly in the summer, but few people may be seen in the streets of the village. The Cossacks are on service, in the cordons and expeditions; the old men are out hunting, fishing, or helping the women in the gardens and orchards. Only the very old and young remain at home.

V.

It was one of those peculiar evenings which one finds only in the Caucasus. The sun had set behind the mountains, but it was still light. The evening glow embraced one-third of the heaven, and the dull white masses of the mountains stood out sharply in the light of the setting sun. The air was rarefied, immovable, and replete with echoes. A shadow, several versts in length, fell from the mountains upon the steppe. In the steppe, beyond the river, along the roads, everything was quiet.

Now and then appeared a few men on horseback: those were Cossacks from the cordon, or Chechéns from their village, who looked with surprise and curiosity at the passengers in the vehicle, and tried to make out who those bad people could be. As the evening, so the people, in dread of each other, clung to the habitations, and only beasts and birds, not fearing man, freely roamed over this wilderness. From the gardens hastened, with merry chatter, before sundown, the Cossack women who had been tying up the wicker fences. And the gardens grew as deserted as the surroundings; but the village became particularly animated.

On all sides the people moved on foot, on horseback, and in squeaky wooden carts to the village. The girls, with shirts tucked up, and with stick in hand, were running, prattling merrily, to the gate, to meet the cattle that were crowding together in a cloud of dust and gnats which they had brought with them from the steppe. The well-fed cows and buffaloes scattered along the streets,

and the Cossack women, in their coloured half-coats, were mingling with them. One could hear their shrill chatter, their merry laugh, and their screams, interrupted by the lowing of the cattle.

Here, a Cossack, in accoutrements and on horseback, who had received his leave from the cordon, rode up to a cabin and, bending down, tapped at the window; and, in reply to the tap, appeared the beautiful head of a young Cossack woman, and one might hear tender words of affection. There, a broad-cheeked, tattered Nogáy labourer, having arrived with reeds from the steppe, turned the squeaking cart into the captain's clean, broad yard, threw down the yoke from the oxen, who shook their heads, and passed a few Tartar words with the master.

Near the puddle, which occupied nearly the whole street, and where people had been walking so many years, a barefooted Cossack woman, clinging close to the fences, made her way with a bundle of firewood on her back, raising her shirt high above her white feet. A Cossack, returning from the hunt, cried out to her, "Lift it higher, shameless one," and aimed his gun at her. The Cossack woman let her shirt fall, and dropped her wood.

An old Cossack, with rolled-up trousers, and gray bosom exposed, returning from his sport, carried on his shoulder a basket with quivering silvery trout; to make a short cut, he climbed across his neighbour's broken fence, and pulled off his coat, which was caught upon it. There, a woman was dragging a dry bough, and the strokes of an axe could be heard around the corner. Young Cossack children screamed, spinning their tops wherever they could find an even spot. Women climbed over fences, to save walking around corners. From all the chimneys rose the smoke from dung-chips. In every yard could be heard an increased bustle, preceding the quiet of the night.

Mother Ulítka, the wife of the ensign and schoolmaster, went, like the rest, to the gate of her house, waiting for

the cattle which her daughter Maryánka was driving in the street. She had barely opened the gate, when a large buffalo-cow, pursued by gnats, rushed bellowing into the yard; after her slowly came the well-fed cows, recognizing their mistress with their large eyes, and evenly switching their sides with their tails.

Stately and beautiful Maryánka walked through the gate and, throwing down the stick, fastened the gate, and ran nimbly to scatter the cattle, and drive them to their stalls.

"Take off your shoes, devil's daughter," cried her mother. "You have muddied your shoes."

Maryánka was not in the least insulted by being called a devil's daughter, but accepted these words as an expression of affection, and continued at her work. Maryánka's face was covered with a kerchief; she wore a rose-coloured shirt and a green half-coat. She disappeared under the penthouse, behind the large, fat cattle, and from the stall was heard her voice, gently admonishing the buffalo-cow, "Why don't you stand? Come now! Oh, there, motherkin! —"

After awhile the girl and her mother came out of the stable, and walked to the dairy, carrying two large pots of milk, — the day's milking. From the clay chimney of the dairy soon rose dung smoke, and the milk was changed into boiled cream. The girl attended to the fire, and the old woman came out to the gate.

Darkness fell over the whole village. In the air was borne the odour of vegetables, of the cattle, and of the fragrant dung smoke. At the gates and in the streets ran Cossack women, carrying burning rags in their hands. In the yards could be heard the gasping and quiet chewing of the cattle stretching themselves, and the voices of women and children calling in the courtyards and streets. On week-days a man's drunken voice is but rarely heard.

An old, tall, masculine Cossack woman, from the house

opposite, walked up to Mother Ulítka to ask her for fire; she held a rag in her hand.

"Well, mother, are you all done?" she said to her.

"The girl is making a fire in the stove. Do you need some light?" said Mother Ulítka, proud of being able to do her a favour.

The two women went into the cabin. The coarse hands, unaccustomed to small objects, trembled as she tore off the lid from the precious box of matches which are a rarity in the Caucasus. The masculine-looking visitor sat down on the threshold, with the evident intention of chatting.

"Well, motherkin, is your husband in the school?" the visitor asked.

"He is all the time teaching the children, mother. He wrote he would be back for the holidays," said the ensign's wife.

"He is a clever man; and cleverness pays."

"Of course, it does."

"But my Lukáshka is in the cordon, and he can't get any leave to come home," said the visitor, although the ensign's wife knew all that. She could not refrain from mentioning her Lukáshka, whom she had but lately allowed to become a Cossack, and whom she was desirous of marrying off to Maryánka, the ensign's daughter.

"So he is in the cordon?"

"Yes, mother. He has not been here since the holidays. A few days ago I sent him some shirts by Fomúshkin. He says everything is well, and the authorities are satisfied with him. They are looking for abréks, says he. Lukáshka, he says, is happy, and everything is all right."

"The Lord be thanked," said the ensign's wife. "In one word he is a 'saver.'"

Lukáshka was called the "Saver" for the bravery which he had displayed in "saving" a boy from drown-

ing. The ensign's wife mentioned this name, in order to say something agreeable to Lukáshka's mother.

"I thank God, mother, he is a good son. He is a fine lad, everybody speaks well of him," said Lukáshka's mother, "only I should like to see him married, and then I could die in peace."

"Well, are there not enough girls in the village?" replied the sly ensign's wife, carefully putting the lid on the match-box with her crooked fingers.

"Plenty, mother, plenty," remarked Lukáshka's mother, shaking her head, "but your girl, Maryánka, your girl, I say, is one the like of whom you will not find in the Cossack settlements."

The ensign's wife knew the intention of Lukáshka's mother; but, although Lukáshka seemed to her to be a good Cossack, she wanted to ward off the subject, — in the first place because she was the ensign's wife, and a rich woman, while Lukáshka was the son of a Cossack of the rank and file, and poor; in the second place, because she did not wish to lose her daughter so soon; but chiefly, because propriety demanded it.

"Well, when Maryánka grows up she will be a nice girl," she said, discreetly and modestly.

"I will send the go-betweens, I will. Just let us get the gardens in shape, and then we will come to ask your favour," said Lukáshka's mother. "We will come to ask Ilyá Vasílevich's favour."

"What has Ilyá to do with it?" the ensign's wife said, proudly. "I am the person to be asked. There is a time for everything."

Lukáshka's mother saw by the stern face of the ensign's wife that it was improper to continue the subject. She lighted the rag with a match and, rising, said: "Do not forget, mother, but remember these words. I must go and start a fire," she added.

As she crossed the street and waved the lighted rag in

her outstretched hand, she met Maryánka, who bowed to her.

"She is a queen of a girl, and a fine worker," she thought, as she looked at the fair maiden. "She has done growing! It is time for her to get married into some good family, — yes, she ought to marry Lukáshka."

Mother Ulítka had cares of her own; she remained sitting on the threshold, and was lost in thought, until her daughter called her.

VI.

THE male population of the village pass their time in expeditions and in cordons, or posts, as the Cossacks call them.

This very Lukáshka the "Saver," of whom the two old women had been speaking, was stationed that evening in a watch-tower of the Nízhne-Protók post. This Nízhne-Protók post is situated on the bank of the Térek. Leaning on the balustrade of the tower, he blinked and looked into the distance beyond the Térek, or upon his Cossack companions below him, and from time to time he chatted with them.

The sun was already approaching the snow-covered range which glistened white above the fleecy clouds. The clouds were billowing at the bases of the mountains, and assumed ever darker shades. The air was bathed in evening transparency. A fresh breeze blew from the wild overgrown forest; but near the post it was still warm.

The voices of the Cossacks at conversation rang clearer, and reëchoed in the air. The swift, cinnamon-coloured Térek stood out, with all its moving mass, more sharply from its immovable banks. It was beginning to fall, and here and there the wet sand looked dark brown on the shore and in the shallows.

On the opposite shore, right across from the cordon, there was nothing but a wilderness: only low desert reeds stretched over a vast expanse as far as the mountains. A little on one side, the clay houses, flat roofs, and funnel-shaped chimneys of a Chechén village could be seen on

the low bank. The keen eyes of the Cossack who stood on the tower watched, through the evening smoke of the peaceful village, the flitting figures of the Chechén women who moved in the distance, in their blue and red dresses.

Although the Cossacks expected that the abréks would cross over from the Tartar side and attack them at any time, but especially in May, when the forest along the Térek is so dense that a man on foot can hardly make his way through it, and when the river is so shallow that it can be forded on foot in some places; and although two days before a Cossack had galloped up from the commander of the regiment with a circular letter in which it said that, according to the information given by spies, a party of eight men intended to cross the Térek, and that, therefore, especial precautions were to be observed, — no special precautions were taken in the cordon. The Cossacks acted as though they were at home, and they walked about without their guns, and their horses were not saddled; some were engaged in fishing, some in carousing, and others in hunting. Only the horse of the officer of the day was saddled, and walked with three feet hobbled on the greensward along the forest, and only the Cossack on guard wore his mantle, musket, and sabre.

The under-officer, a tall, haggard Cossack, with an unusually long back and short legs and arms, in nothing but an unbuttoned half-coat, was sitting on the mound of the hut, and, with an expression of official laziness and ennui, closed his eyes, and rolled his head from one hand to the other. An old Cossack, with a broad, black beard, streaked with gray, in nothing but his shirt girded with a black strap, was lying near the water, and lazily watching the monotonously roaring water of the meandering Térek. The others, who were also tormented by the heat, were half-dressed; one was washing his linen in the Térek; another was plaiting a fishing-line; another was lying on the ground, in the hot sand of the bank, and mumbling a

song. One Cossack, with a haggard and swarthy face, lay, apparently dead drunk, on his belly near one of the walls of the hut, which some two hours before had been in the shade, but upon which now fell the burning slanting rays.

Lukáshka, who was stationed in the watch-tower, was a handsome fellow, about twenty years of age, and very much like his mother. His face and his whole figure expressed, in spite of the angularity of youth, great physical and moral strength. Although he had but lately been taken into the army, one could see from the broad features of his face and from the calm self-confidence of his attitude that he had already succeeded in acquiring that martial and somewhat proud bearing, which is characteristic of the Cossacks and of people in general, who are continually in arms, — that he was a Cossack, and that he knew his full value. His broad mantle was torn in places; his cap was poised jauntily in Chechén fashion; his leggings fell below his knees. His attire was not rich, but it fitted him with that Cossack foppishness which consists in the imitation of the Chechén braves.

In a real brave everything hangs loosely and carelessly in tatters; only the weapons are of the richest. But this ragged attire and the weapons are put on, girded, and adjusted in a certain fashion, which not everybody can acquire, and which immediately catches the eye of a Cossack or mountaineer. Lukáshka had this appearance of a Chechén brave. Placing his hands under his sabre, and blinking with his eyes, he kept looking at the distant village. The separate features of his face were not handsome; but upon surveying at once his stately form, and his black-browed and intelligent face, everybody would involuntarily say, "He is a fine chap!"

"What a lot of women that village is pouring out!" he said, in a sharp voice, lazily opening his shining white teeth, and speaking to nobody in particular.

Nazárka, who was lying below, immediately raised his head and said:

"They must be going for water."

"I ought to fire a shot to frighten them," said Lukáshka, laughing. "How they would squirm!"

"You can't shoot so far!"

"Indeed? Mine will shoot beyond them. Just give me a chance! When their holiday comes, I will visit Giréy-khan, and will drink their millet beer," said Lukáshka, angrily warding off the gnats that pestered him.

A rustling in the forest attracted the attention of the Cossacks. A spotted mongrel pointer, scenting a trail, and excitedly wagging his hairless tail, ran up to the cordon. Lukáshka recognized the hunting-dog of his neighbour, Uncle Eróshka, and soon after he made out in the thicket the moving form of the hunter himself.

Uncle Eróshka was a Cossack of enormous stature, with a broad, snow-white beard, and such broad shoulders and chest that in the forest, where there was nobody with whom he could be compared, he appeared, on account of the excellent proportion of all his strong limbs, rather undersized. He wore a ragged, tucked-up coat, buckskin shoes tied with twine to his rag socks, and a rumpled white cap. On his back he carried, over one shoulder, a snare for pheasants, and a bag with a chicken and a falcon for alluring hawks; over the other shoulder he carried a dead wildcat attached to a leather strap; he also carried on his back, stuck behind his belt, a pouch with bullets, powder, and bread, a horsetail with which to switch off the gnats, a large dagger in a torn, blood-stained sheath, and a brace of dead pheasants. When he saw the cordon he stopped.

"O Lyam!" he shouted to his dog in such a sonorous bass that the echo was repeated far in the woods; he shifted on his shoulder the huge percussion-gun, which the Cossacks call "flinta," and raised his cap.

"A good day to you, good people! Oh, there!" he turned to the Cossacks, in the same powerful and joyful voice; he spoke without effort, and yet as loud as if he were talking to some one across the river.

"A good day to you, uncle!" merrily sounded the youthful voices of the Cossacks, from all sides.

"Well, have you seen anything? Do tell me!" cried Uncle Eróshka, wiping the sweat from his broad, red face with the sleeve of his mantle.

"Listen, uncle? There is some hawk living here in the plane-tree! Every evening he goes circling in the air," said Nazárka, blinking with his eye, and twitching his shoulder and leg.

"You don't say?" the old man said, incredulously.

"Truly, uncle, you watch awhile," insisted Nazárka, laughing.

The Cossacks all laughed.

The jester had not seen any hawk; but it had long become a habit with the young Cossacks of the cordon to tease and deceive Uncle Eróshka every time he came near them.

"Oh, you fool, talking rubbish!" said Lukáshka from the watch-tower to Nazárka.

Nazárka at once grew silent.

"I must watch, and I will," said the old man, to the great amusement of the Cossacks. "Have you seen any boars?"

"The idea! Watching boars!" said the under-officer, glad to have an opportunity to divert himself, rolling over, and scratching his long back with both his hands. "We have to catch abréks here, and not boars. Uncle, haven't you heard anything, eh?" he added, blinking without cause, and opening his even row of white teeth.

"Abréks?" said the old man. "No, I have not. Well, have you any red wine? Let me have a drink, good man! I am tired, really, I am. Just give me a

chance, and I will bring you some venison, really, I will. Now, let me have it," he added.

"Are you going to watch all night?" the under-officer asked, as if not hearing what he had said.

"I want to stay up a night," said Uncle Eróshka. "Maybe God will grant me to kill something by the holidays, and then I will give you some, really, I will!"

"Uncle! Ho, there, uncle!" shouted Lukáshka from above, so loudly that all the Cossacks looked up to him. "You go up to the upper arm of the river, there is a fine herd there. I am not lying. Bang! The other day one of us Cossacks killed one there. I am telling the truth," he added, adjusting the musket on his back, in a voice which left no doubt that he was not jesting.

"Oh, Lukáshka the 'Saver' is here!" said the old man, looking up. "Where did he shoot?"

"You did not see me! I must be very small!" said Lukáshka. "Near the very ditch, uncle," he added, earnestly, shaking his head. "We were walking along the ditch, when there was a crackling noise, but my gun was in its case. Ilyá banged away. Uncle, I will show you the place; it is not far from here. Just give me a chance. I know all the paths. Uncle Mosév!" he added to the under-officer, with determination and almost commandingly. "It is time to relieve the guard!" and, picking up his gun, he began to come down from the tower, without waiting for the order.

"Come down!" said the under-officer, after awhile, looking around him. "It is your watch, isn't it, Gúrka? Go! Your Lukáshka is getting to be clever," added the under-officer, turning to the old man. "He goes a-hunting like you, and can't stay at home; the other day he killed one!"

VII.

THE sun had disappeared, and the shadows of the night rapidly advanced from the forest. The Cossacks had finished their occupations at the cordon, and were getting ready to go to the hut for supper. Only the old man, in expectation of the hawk, remained under the plane-tree, pulling at the cord by which the falcon was tied. The hawk sat on a tree, but did not descend upon the chicken.

Lukáshka leisurely placed in the pheasant track, in the blackthorn grove, nooses with which to catch the pheasants, and sang one song after another. In spite of his tall stature and big hands, every kind of work, large and small, was, it appeared, equally successful in Lukáshka's hands.

"O Luká!" he heard Nazárka's shrill voice from near by in the grove. "The Cossacks have gone to their supper."

Nazárka was making his way through the blackthorn, with a pheasant under his arm, and finally crawled out on the foot-path.

"Oh!" said Lukáshka, growing silent for a moment. "Where did you get that cock? It must be my snare."

Nazárka was of the same age as Lukáshka, and had entered the army, like him, in the spring.

He was a short, homely, lean, sickly man, with a squeaky voice that grated upon the ears. He was a neighbour and friend of Lukáshka. Lukáshka was sitting in Tartar fashion on the grass, and fixing the nooses.

"I do not know whose, but very likely yours."

"Was it beyond the hole near the plane-tree? That is mine, I placed it there yesterday."

Lukáshka got up, and looked at the pheasant. He patted his dark blue head, which the cock stretched forward in fright, rolling his eyes, and took him into his hands.

"We shall prepare a pilau to-day. Go and kill him, and pick his feathers!"

"Shall we eat it alone, or shall we give it to the under-officer?"

"He has had enough."

"I am afraid to kill them," said Nazárka.

"Let me have him!"

Lukáshka took out his knife from beneath his dagger, and drew it rapidly across the bird's neck. The bird fluttered, but before he had time to open his wings his bloody head was bent back and hung down.

"This is the way it is done," said Lukáshka, throwing down the cock. "It will be a fat pilau."

Nazárka shuddered, looking at the bird.

"Listen, Luká, the devil will send us again into the 'secret,'" he added, as he raised the pheasant, meaning the under-officer by the word "devil." "He has sent Fomúshkin for some red wine, it was his turn. Every night we go out, the enemy comes out against us."

Lukáshka walked, whistling, along the cordon.

"Pick up the twine!" he shouted.

Nazárka obeyed him.

"I will tell him to-day, really I will," continued Nazárka. "We will say we won't go, because we are tired, and that is the end of it. You tell him that; he will listen to you. What sense is there in going?"

"Now this is not worth talking about!" said Lukáshka, evidently thinking of something else. "Nonsense! It would be insulting if he drove us out of the village for

the night. For there you can have a good time, but here? Whether in the cordon, or in the 'secret,' is one and the same. Really!"

"And will you come down to the village?"

"I will, on the holiday."

"Gúrka said that your Dunáyka is keeping company with Fomúshkin," suddenly said Nazárka.

"The devil take her!" answered Lukáshka, grinning with his even white teeth, but not laughing. "Can't I find another?"

"Gúrka said like this: he went to see her, says he, and her husband was not there. Fomúshkin was there, eating a pie. He stayed awhile, and went away; under the window he heard her say, 'The devil is gone; why, darling, do you not eat the pie? And,' says she, 'don't go home to sleep!' And he said under the window, 'That is fine!'"

"You are lying!"

"Really, upon my word!"

Lukáshka was silent.

"Well, if she has found another, the deuce take her. There are lots of girls. I am tired of her, anyway."

"What a devil you are!" said Nazárka. "You had better try to get into the graces of Maryánka, the ensign's. She is not keeping company with anybody?"

Lukáshka frowned. "Maryánka! It is all the same!" he said.

"Well, you tackle her —"

"What do you think? Are there not enough of them in the village?"

And Lukáshka again whistled, and walked along the cordon, tearing off leaves and branches. As he walked between some bushes, he suddenly noticed a smooth withe; he stopped, took out his knife from under his dagger, and cut it off. "It will make a fine ramrod," he said, swishing the withe in the air.

The Cossacks were at their supper in the clay vestibule of the cordon; they were seated on the floor, around a low Tartar table, and conversing about whose turn it would be to go to the "secret."

"Who goes to-day?" cried one of the Cossacks, turning to the under-officer through the open door of the hut.

"Who will go?" replied the under-officer. "Uncle Burlák has been there, Fomúshkin has been," he said, with some indecision. "You go, eh? You and Nazárka," he turned to Lukáshka, "and Ergushóv will go, if he has had his sleep."

"You never have your sleep, how should he?" said Nazárka, half-loud.

The Cossacks laughed.

Ergushóv was the very Cossack who was drunk, and had been asleep near the hut. He had just waked and, rubbing his eyes, waddled into the vestibule.

Lukáshka rose, and got his gun in shape.

"Be quick about it; have your supper, and go!" said the under-officer. Without waiting for an expression of consent, the under-officer closed the door, evidently having little hope that the Cossacks would obey him. "If I were not commanded, I would not send you; but the captain might run into us, before we know it. And besides, they say eight abréks have crossed over."

"Well, we must go," said Ergushóv, "it's the order! You can't do otherwise, — times are such. I say, we must go."

Lukáshka, in the meantime, held with both hands a big piece of the pheasant before his mouth, and, looking now at the under-officer, and now at Nazárka, was apparently quite indifferent to what was going on around him, and laughed at both of them. The Cossacks had not yet gone away to the "secret" when Uncle Eróshka, who

had sat up until night under the plane-tree, without accomplishing anything, entered into the dark vestibule.

"Well, boys," boomed his bass, in the low vestibule, "I will go with you, — you will lie in ambush for Chechéns, and I for boars."

VIII.

It was quite dark when Uncle Eróshka and the three Cossacks of the cordon, in felt mantles, and with their guns over their shoulders, walked down the Térek to the place which had been designated as the ambush. Nazárka did not want to go at all; but Lukáshka shouted to him, and they got quickly ready. After having walked a few steps in silence, the Cossacks turned away from the ditch, and over an almost imperceptible foot-path through the reeds walked up to the Térek. Near the bank lay a thick black log, cast out by the river, and the reeds around the log looked freshly crushed.

"Shall we 'sit' here?" said Nazárka.

"Why not?" said Lukáshka. "Sit down here; I will be back in a minute, as soon as I have shown the place to uncle."

"This is a very fine place. We can't be seen, but we can see everything," said Ergushóv. "We had better sit here; it is a first-class place."

Nazárka and Ergushóv spread out their mantles behind the log, and Lukáshka went away a distance with Uncle Eróshka.

"Not far from here, uncle," said Lukáshka, stepping cautiously in front of the old man, "I will show you where they passed. I, my friend, am the only one who knows."

"Show me! You are a good fellow," answered the old man, also in a whisper.

Having taken a few steps, Lukáshka stopped, bent over a puddle, and whistled. "Here they came to drink, you see," he said, just audibly, pointing to a fresh track.

"The Lord preserve you," answered the old man. "The boar must be in the wallow beyond the ditch," he added. "I will sit here, and you go."

Lukáshka shifted his mantle, and went by himself back along the bank, casting rapid glances, now on the left to the wall of reeds, now on the Térek, which foamed below the bank. "He is himself watching, or creeping along somewhere," he thought about the Chechéns. Suddenly a loud rustling and splashing in the water made him shudder and grasp his musket. Upon the shore leaped, breathing heavily, a boar, and the black form, which for a moment stood out from the shining surface of the water, disappeared in the reeds. Luká quickly took his gun and aimed, but before he had a chance to shoot, the boar was lost in the thicket. He spit out in anger, and walked on. When he came to the place of ambush, he again stopped, and whistled lightly. He received an answer, and walked up to his companions.

Nazárka was rolled up in his mantle, and asleep. Ergushóv was sitting with his legs crossed under him; he moved a little, so as to make place for Lukáshka.

"How jolly it is to 'sit'! Really, it is a fine place," he said. "Have you settled him?"

"I have shown him the place," replied Lukáshka, spreading his mantle. "I just scared up a strapping boar near the water. It must be the same one. Did you hear the noise he made?"

"I did hear the noise, and I knew at once it must be an animal. I thought you had scared up the beast," said Ergushóv, wrapping himself in his mantle. "I will now take a nap," he added. "Wake me after cockcrow; because, that's the order. First I'll take a nap, and then you, and I will sit up. That's right."

"Thank you, I do not care to sleep," answered Lukáshka.

The night was dark, warm, and calm. The stars were shining only on one side of the horizon; the other, greater part of the sky, on the side of the mountains, was shrouded by one large cloud. This black cloud, uniting with the mountains, was not agitated by the wind, but moved slowly farther and farther, its curving edges standing out sharply in the deep, starry heaven.

Only in front of him the Cossack could see the Térek and the dim distance; behind him and on both sides he was surrounded by a wall of reeds. From time to time the reeds began to wave and rustle against each other, without any apparent cause. Below, the waving cattails looked like bushy branches of trees against the bright edge of the sky. In front of him, at his very feet, was the bank, below which the river was roaring.

Farther away the gleaming mass of moving cinnamon-coloured water monotonously rippled near the shoals and along the bank. Still farther, the water, and bank, and cloud, all blended into impenetrable darkness.

On the surface of the water were long-drawn shadows, which the experienced eye of the Cossack recognized as tree-trunks carried down by the current. Now and then the sheet-lightning, reflecting in the water, as in a dark mirror, indicated the line of the opposite declivitous bank.

The even sounds of the night, the rustling of the reeds, the snoring of the Cossacks, the buzzing of the gnats, and the roaring of the water were occasionally interrupted by a distant shot, the plunge of the bank caving in, the splashing of a big fish, and the crashing of an animal through the wild, overgrown forest.

Once an owl flew down the Térek, flapping its wings together exactly after every two strokes. Right over the Cossacks' heads it turned toward the forest, this time

flapping its wings after every stroke, and not alternately, and then fluttered about for a long time before alighting on an old plane-tree. At every such unexpected sound, the waking Cossack strained his ears, blinked, and leisurely fingered his musket.

The greater part of the night had passed. The black cloud, moving to the west, disclosed behind its ragged edges the clear, starry heaven, and the tipping golden horn of the moon gleamed red above the mountains. It was getting chilly.

Nazárka awoke, said something, and again fell asleep. Lukáshka, being tired, got up, took his knife from behind his dagger, and began to whittle the stick into a ramrod. He was thinking how the Chechéns were living there in the mountains; how their braves crossed on this side; how they were not afraid of the Cossacks; and how they might cross in another place. And he craned his neck, and looked down the river, but he could see nothing. Glancing now and then at the river and at the distant shore which was feebly differentiated from the water in the pale light of the moon, he stopped thinking of the Chechéns, and only waited for the time to wake his companions, and go back to the village. In the village he thought of Dúnka, his little soul, as the Cossacks call their sweethearts, and he was angry.

There were signs of the morning. A silvery mist gleamed over the water, and some young eagles uttered a shrill whistle near him, and flapped their wings. Finally, the crowing of the first cock was borne afar from the village, then another protracted cockcrow, to which other voices answered.

"It is time to wake them," thought Lukáshka, having finished his ramrod, and feeling that his eyelids were getting heavy. He turned to his companions, and tried to make out to whom each pair of legs belonged. But suddenly it appeared to him that something splashed on

the other side of the Térek, and he once more gazed at the dawning horizon of the mountains, under the tipping sickle of the moon, at the line of the opposite shore, at the Térek, and at the trunks which were distinctly visible in the current. It seemed to him that he was in motion, and that the Térek with the tree-trunks was stationary; but that lasted only a minute. He looked down once more.

One large black trunk with a bough more especially attracted his attention. It was moving strangely in the middle of the stream, without rolling or twisting. He even thought that it did not follow the current, but made across the river toward a shoal. Lukáshka craned his neck, and began to watch it with fixed attention. The trunk reached the shoal, where it stopped; there was something moving there. Lukáshka was sure he had seen a hand rise from underneath the log.

"I will kill an abrék all by myself!" he thought, seized his gun without undue haste, but swiftly planted his forked support, placed his gun over it, softly raised the hammer, holding it with his fingers, and, holding his breath, kept a sharp lookout, and began to aim.

"I will not wake them," he thought. Still, his heart began to beat so powerfully in his breast, that he stopped to listen. The log suddenly splashed, and again made straight for our shore.

"It would be dreadful if I let him through!" he thought, and suddenly, in the feeble moonlight, a Tartar head flashed in front of the log. He aimed straight at that head. It seemed to him to be very near, at the end of his barrel. He looked across.

"That is it, an abrék," he thought joyfully, and suddenly getting up on his knees, he again adjusted the gun, looked for the sight, which was barely visible at the end of the long barrel, and, according to a Cossack custom, acquired in childhood, pronounced "To the Father and

the Son," and pulled the trigger. The flash for a moment lighted up the reeds and the water. The sharp, crackling sound of the discharge rang out over the river, and passed into a distant rumble. The log no longer swam across the river, but down the current, rolling and quivering.

"Hold him, I say!" cried Ergushóv, fingering his musket, and raising himself behind the log.

"Keep quiet, devil!" Lukáshka whispered to him with clinched teeth. "Abréks!"

"Whom did you shoot?" asked Nazárka. "Whom did you shoot, Lukáshka?"

Lukáshka did not answer. He loaded his gun, and watched the log that was carried down the stream. It stopped on a shoal, not far off, and something large, moving on the water, appeared from behind it.

"What did you shoot? Why don't you tell?" repeated the Cossacks.

"Abréks, I told you," repeated Lukáshka.

"Stop guying us! The gun, I guess, went off by itself!"

"I have killed an abrék! That's what I have killed!" said Lukáshka, in a voice trembling with excitement, leaping to his feet. "A man was swimming —" he said, pointing to the shoal. "I have killed him. Look there!"

"Stop telling lies!" said Ergushóv, rubbing his eyes.

"What lies? Look there! Look," said Lukáshka, grabbing him by the shoulders and bending him downward toward him with such force that Ergushóv groaned.

Ergushóv looked in the direction pointed out by Lukáshka, and, noticing a human form there, at once changed his tone.

"I declare! I tell you, there will be others. I tell you for sure," he said, quietly, and began to examine his musket. "That was the leader who was making across;

they are already here, or not far away, on the other shore; I am telling you for sure."

Lukáshka ungirded himself, and began to take off his mantle.

"Whither do you want to go, fool?" cried Ergushóv. "You just move, and it will be up with you, I am telling you for sure. If you have killed him he will not get away. Let me have some powder. Have you any? Nazár! You go at once to the cordon, but don't go along the bank; they'll kill you, I am telling you for sure."

"You will see me go alone! Go yourself!" Nazárka said, angrily.

Lukáshka took off his mantle, and walked up to the bank.

"Don't expose yourself, I tell you," said Ergushóv, pouring powder on the pan of his gun. "I see he is not moving now. It is not far to morning, and by that time they'll come up from the cordon. Go on, Nazárka! Oh, you are afraid! Don't be afraid, I say."

"Lukáshka, Lukáshka," said Nazárka, "tell us how you killed him."

Lukáshka changed his mind about going immediately into the water.

"Go to the cordon at once, and I will stay here. Tell the Cossacks to scatter. If they are on this side, we ought to catch them."

"I say they will get away," said Ergushóv, rising. "We ought to catch them, that's so."

And Ergushóv and Nazárka got up, and, crossing themselves, went to the cordon, not along the bank, but making their way through the buckthorns and getting out on the forest path.

"Look out, Lukáshka, don't stir!" said Ergushóv, "or they'll cut your throat here. Be on the lookout, I tell you."

"Go on, I know," said Lukáshka, and, examining his gun, he took up his seat behind the log.

Lukáshka sat all alone, watching the shoal, and listening for the Cossacks; but it was quite a distance to the cordon, and impatience tormented him; he was dreadfully afraid that the abréks who came with the man he had killed would get away. He was just as much in dread that the abréks would get away, as he had been mortified the night before at the escape of the boar. He gazed all around him, and at the opposite bank, expecting to see a man any time; he planted his forked support, and was ready to shoot. It did not even occur to him that he might be killed.

IX.

DAY was dawning. The whole form of the Chechén, which had been carried to the shoal, and was barely moving there, was now distinctly visible. Suddenly the reeds crashed near the Cossack, steps were heard, and the cattails came into motion. The Cossack cocked his gun, and said, "To the Father and the Son." As soon as the hammer clicked, the steps were silenced.

"O Cossacks! Don't kill uncle," was heard the quiet bass, and, pushing aside the reeds, Uncle Eróshka stood right before him.

"I came very near killing you, upon my word!" said Lukáshka.

"What have you shot?" asked the old man.

The melodious voice of the old man, ringing through the forest and down the river, suddenly broke the stillness and mystery of the night, which had surrounded the Cossack. It seemed as though it had suddenly become lighter and brighter.

"Now, you have seen nothing, uncle, but I have killed a beast," said Lukáshka, uncocking his gun, and rising in feigned composure.

The old man did not take his eyes off the clearly discernible white back, around which the Térek rippled.

"He had been swimming with the log on his back. I watched for him. Just look there! There! He is in blue trousers, and I think there is a gun — You see, don't you?" said Lukáshka.

"Of course I see!" said the old man, angrily, and there

was a solemn and austere expression in his face. "You have killed a brave," he said, as though with regret.

"I was sitting, and suddenly I saw something black on the other side. I had almost made him out there: it looked as though a man had walked up and dropped into the river. What was it? A log, a big log was swimming, not down the current, but straight across. I looked, and there a head peeped out from underneath it. What is that? I aimed, but I could not see behind the reeds. He stood up, the beast, having heard me, no doubt, and crawled out on a shoal, and looked about him. 'You are mistaken,' thought I, 'you will not get away.' He crept up, and looked around. (I felt like choking!) I fixed the gun, did not stir, and waited. He stood awhile, and again started swimming; and when he swam out in the moon, his back could be seen. 'To the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost!' I looked, after the smoke had cleared away, and saw that he was struggling. He groaned, or I thought he did. 'Well, thank the Lord,' I thought, 'I have killed him!' And when he was carried on the shoal, and he got out, and wanted to get up, he saw that he had no strength. He floundered and floundered, and lay down. It is clear now, and one can see everything. He does not stir; no doubt he is dead. The Cossacks have gone to the cordon, to keep the others from escaping!"

"So you have caught him!" said the old man. "It is far now, my friend—" And he again shook his head gloomily. At that moment Cossacks on foot and on horseback could be heard along the bank, conversing loudly and crashing through the branches.

"You are a fine fellow, Lukáshka! Pull him to the shore," shouted one of the Cossacks.

Lukáshka did not wait for the skiff, but began to undress himself, keeping all the time a close watch on his prey.

"Wait, Nazárka is bringing up a skiff," cried the under-officer.

"Fool! He may be alive! He is feigning! Take along a dagger," cried another Cossack.

"Nonsense!" cried Lukáshka, taking off his trousers. He undressed himself in a trice, crossed himself, and, leaping up, jumped into the water with a splash; he took a plunge, reached out far with his white arms, and raising his back high out of the water, and struggling against the current, made across the Térek, toward the shoal. A crowd of Cossacks were talking loudly on the shore, a few voices at a time. Three horsemen rode far around. The skiff appeared around a bend. Lukáshka rose on the shoal, bent over the body, and rolled it around once or twice. "He is certainly dead!" rang out Lukáshka's voice from there.

The Chechén had been shot through his head. He wore blue trousers, a shirt, and a mantle; and a gun and a dagger were tied to his back. Above it all was fastened a large bough which had at first mystified Lukáshka.

"That's the way the carp was caught!" said one of the Cossacks, who were standing around, when the body of the Chechén was dragged out of the skiff, and lay on the bank, crushing the grass.

"How yellow he is!" said another.

"Where have ours gone to find them? They must all be on the other side. If he were not the leader, he would not have swum in this fashion. What sense would there be in swimming all alone?" said a third.

"I say he must have been a clever fellow, to have gone ahead of the rest. A first-class brave!" Lukáshka remarked, sarcastically, squeezing out his wet clothes on the shore, and shuddering all the time. "His beard is painted and cropped."

"And he had fixed his coat in a bag on his back. This made it easier for him to swim," some one remarked.

"Listen, Lukáshka," said the under-officer, who was holding the gun and dagger that had been taken from the dead man. "You take the dagger and the coat; and for the gun come and get three roubles. You see it has a rift," he added, blowing down the barrel, "but I should like to have it as a memento."

Lukáshka did not reply; he was evidently annoyed at this begging, but he knew that there was no escaping it.

"Well, the devil!" he said, frowning, and throwing the coat down on the ground. "If it were a decent coat, but it is only a gabardine."

"It will do to haul wood in," said another Cossack.

"Mosév! I will go home," said Lukáshka, evidently forgetting his annoyance, and trying to make good use of his present to his superior.

"Go, why not?"

"Take him down to the cordon, boys," the under-officer said, turning to the Cossacks, all the time examining the gun. "And we must make a tent over his body. They may come down from the mountains to ransom it."

"It is not too hot yet," some one said.

"Won't the jackals tear him up? Would that be well?" one of the Cossacks remarked.

"We will place a sentinel near by. They will come to ransom the .body, and it would not do to have it all torn."

"Well, Lukáshka, you may say what you please, but you will have to treat the boys to a bucketful," the under-officer added, merrily.

"That is the custom," the Cossacks chimed in. "Just see the luck God has given him! He has not seen anything yet, but has already killed an abrék."

"Buy the dagger and the coat of me! I want all the money I can get. I will sell the trousers, too. God be with you," said Lukáshka. "They won't fit me, — he was a lean devil."

One Cossack bought the coat for a rouble. Another gave two bucketfuls for the dagger.

"You will have a drink, boys, for I will set up a bucket," said Lukáshka. "I'll fetch it myself from the village."

"And cut up the trousers for kerchiefs for the girls," said Nazárka.

The Cossacks roared.

"Stop your laughing!" said the under-officer. "Drag off the body! Who wants to keep such a thing near the hut—"

"Why are you standing around? Drag him over here, boys!" Lukáshka shouted in a voice of command to the Cossacks, who did not like to touch the body, but carried out his orders as though he were their superior. After dragging the body away for a few steps, the Cossacks dropped its legs, which hung down lifeless; they stepped aside, and stood for a moment in silence. Nazárka walked up to the body, and straightened out the head, which had bent under, so that the round blood-stained wound above the temple and the face of the dead man could be seen.

"You see what a mark he has made there! Hit him right in his brain!" he said. "He will not be lost. His people will identify him."

No one said a word, and again the angel of silence passed over the Cossacks.

The sun had risen, and with its broken beams lighted up the dewy foliage. The Térek roared not far off, in the awakening forest. The pheasants called to each other on all sides, greeting the morning. The Cossacks stood, silent and motionless, around the dead man, and gazed at him. His cinnamon-coloured body, in nothing but blue trousers, turned darker from having been soaked in the water, and held together by a belt over his hollow belly, was slender and beautiful. His muscular arms lay straight, down his ribs. His livid, freshly shaven round head, with the

clotted wound at one side, was bent back. The smooth, sunburnt forehead stood out sharply from his shaven head. The glassy, open eyes, with their pupils standing low, looked upwards, apparently beyond everything. On his thin lips, with their drawn edges, which could be seen behind his clipped red moustache, there seemed to hover a good-natured, delicate smile. The small finger joints were covered with red hairs; the fingers were bent inwardly, and the nails were dyed red.

Lukáshka was not yet dressed. He was wet; his neck was redder, and his eyes were sparkling more than usual; his broad cheek-bones quivered; from his white, healthy body a barely perceptible evaporation rose into the fresh morning air.

"He was a man, too!" he said, apparently admiring the dead body.

"Yes, if he had gotten you, he would not have let you off," said one of the Cossacks.

The angel of silence flew away. The Cossacks began to stir, and to chat. Two went to cut some brush for the tent. Others leisurely walked back to the cordon. Lukáshka and Nazárka hastened to get ready for the village.

Half an hour later, Lukáshka and Nazárka, almost on a run, were making their way home, through the dense forest which separated the Térek from their village; they did not cease talking.

"Don't tell her, remember, that I have sent you. You just go and see whether her husband is at home," said Lukáshka, in a shrill voice.

"And I will go and see Yámka. We will have a good time, won't we?" asked submissive Nazárka.

"When are we to have a good time, if not to-day?" answered Lukásha.

Upon arriving at the village the Cossacks drank themselves drunk, and went to sleep until the evening.

X.

Two days after this occurrence, two companies of infantry of the Army of the Caucasus came to take up quarters in the village of Novomlín. The company wagons already stood unhitched in the square. The cooks had dug a hole and brought together from the different yards any chips that were not securely put away, and were cooking soup. The corporals were calling the roll. The soldiers of the convoy were driving down stakes to tie their horses to. The quartermaster-sergeants, who were at home here, rushed through the streets and lanes, assigning quarters to the officers and soldiers.

Here were green caissons drawn up in battle array. Here were the company's carts and their horses. Here were the kettles in which the buckwheat porridge was cooked. Here was the captain, and the lieutenant, and Onisím Mikháylovich, the sergeant.

And all this found itself in the very village where, so they said, the companies were ordered to be stationed; consequently the companies were at home. Why are they stationed here? Who are these Cossacks? Do they like to have soldiers stationed in their village? Are they dissenters or not? That is nobody's business.

Being dismissed after roll-call, the tired and dusty soldiers, noisily and in disorder, like a settling swarm of bees, scattered over the squares and streets. Paying not the least attention to the unfriendly attitude of the Cossacks, they entered the huts, in groups of two and three, chattering merrily and clattering with their guns; they hung

up their accoutrements, opened their bags, and joked with the women.

A large group of soldiers, with pipes between their teeth, gathered in their favourite place, near the gruel-kettles. They now watched the smoke which rose imperceptibly to the burning sky, and high up in the air condensed into a white cloud, or the camp-fire which trembled in the clear air like melted glass; they bantered and ridiculed the Cossack men and women for living differently from the Russians.

In all the yards soldiers could be seen; one could hear their laughter, and the furious, shrill voices of the Cossack women, defending their houses, and refusing water and utensils. Little boys and girls pressed close to their mothers and to each other, following, with an expression of amazement, all the unfamiliar movements of the soldiers, or they ran after them at a respectful distance. The old Cossacks came out of their cabins, sat down on the mounds, and gloomily and in silence watched the bustle of the soldiers, as though giving everything up in despair, and not understanding what would come of it all.

Olénin, who had been enrolled in the Army of the Caucasus for the last three months, was assigned quarters with the Ensign Ilyá Vasílevich, that is, with Mother Ulítka, in one of the best cabins in the village.

"What will this be, Dmítri Andréevich?" said Vanyúsha, out of breath, to Olénin, who, dressed in a mantle, after a five-hour ride, merrily cantered on his Kabardá horse, which he had purchased at Gróznaya, into the yard of the assigned quarters.

"Why so, Iván Vasílevich?" he asked, patting his horse, and cheerfully looking at perspiring Vanyúsha, who, with his dishevelled hair and dejected face, had arrived with the baggage, and was now sorting out things.

Olénin appeared now an entirely different man. In-

stead of his shaven face, he now wore a young beard and moustache. Instead of his drawn face, sallow from nightly dissipations, there was a healthy ruddy tan on his cheeks and forehead and behind his ears. Instead of a clean new black dress coat, he wore a dirty white mantle with wide folds, and weapons. Instead of clean starched collars, the red collar of a half-coat of Persian silk fitted tightly around his sunburnt neck. He was clad in Circassian fashion, but not correctly so; anybody could have told that he was a Russian, and not a Chechén brave. Everything was correct, and yet wrong! But his whole figure breathed health, cheerfulness, and self-satisfaction.

"It is all funny to you," said Vanyúsha, "but just try and talk with these people: they won't let you alone, and that is all. You can't get a word out of them." Vanyúsha angrily threw down an iron pail at the threshold. "They are anything but Russians!"

"You ought to have gone to the village commander!"

"But I do not know where all the places are," Vanyúsha replied, peevishly.

"Who has been insulting you?" Olénin asked, casting a glance around him.

"The devil knows them! Pshaw! The real master is not here; they say he has gone to a 'kríga.'[1] And the old woman is a devil, — the Lord preserve me from such," answered Vanyúsha, grasping his head. "I really do not know how we shall manage to live here. They are worse than Tartars, upon my word. What of it if they call themselves Christians? Take a Tartar, he is more gentlemanly. 'He has gone to the kríga!' I can't make out what they mean by 'kríga'!" Vanyúsha concluded, turning aside.

"What? They are not like our country people?" said Olénin, jestingly, remaining on his horse.

[1] A place near the bank, surrounded by a wattled fence, where fish are caught.

"Let me have the horse, if you please," said Vanyúsha, obviously put out by the new order of things, but submitting to fate.

"So a Tartar is more gentlemanly? Eh, Vanyúsha?" repeated Olénin, dismounting, and slapping his saddle.

"Yes, you can laugh! It seems funny to you!" said Vanyúsha, in an angry voice.

"Wait, don't get angry, Iván Vasílevich," answered Olénin, continuing to smile. "Just let me see the people, and you will see how I will settle them. We will have a glorious time yet! Only do not excite yourself!"

Vanyúsha did not retort anything; he blinked, contemptuously looked in the direction of his master, and shook his head. Vanyúsha looked upon Olénin only as upon his master. Olénin looked upon Vanyúsha only as upon his servant. They would both have been very much surprised if some one had told them that they were friends. Yet they were friends, without knowing it themselves. Vanyúsha had been taken to the house when he was eleven years old, when Olénin was of the same age. When Olénin was fifteen years old, he for awhile gave Vanyúsha lessons, and taught him to read French, of which fact Vanyúsha was exceedingly proud. And even now, in moments of cheerfulness, he was in the habit of dropping now and then a French word, whereat he grinned stupidly.

Olénin ran up to the porch of the cabin, and pushed the door open into the vestibule. Maryánka, in nothing but a rose-coloured shirt, as Cossack women are dressed at home, leaped away from the door in affright, and, pressing against the wall, covered the lower part of her face with the broad sleeve of her Tartar shirt. As Olénin opened the door still farther, he saw in the half-light the whole tall and stately figure of the young Cossack maiden. With the swift and eager curiosity of youth, he involuntarily noticed the strong, virgin form clearly outlined

under the thin chintz shirt, and the beautiful black eyes which were directed upon him with childlike terror and wild surprise.

"There she is!" thought Olénin. "Yes, there will be many more such," it suddenly occurred to him, and he opened another door of the cabin. Mother Ulítka, also in nothing but a shirt, was turned with her back toward him, and, bending over, was sweeping the floor.

"Good day, mother! I have come to ask about the quarters," he began.

The Cossack woman, without unbending, turned to him her austere, but still comely face.

"What did you come for? You want to make fun of me? What? I'll give you fun! The black plague take you!" she cried, looking askance at the stranger, with a scowl.

Olénin had imagined at first that the hard-working brave Army of the Caucasus, of which he was a member, would be received everywhere with joy, especially by the Cossacks, his companions of war, and therefore such a reception puzzled him. However, he did not become confused, and wished to explain that he intended to pay for his quarters, but the old woman would not let him finish his words.

"Why did you come? Who needs such a sore? You sandpapered snout! Just wait, the master will come, and he will show you the place! I do not need your damnable money. I guess we have seen that before! You will smoke up the room with your tobacco, and you mean to pay with money for it! We have not seen such a sore before! Oh, that they had shot your heart out!" she cried, in a shrill voice, interrupting Olénin.

"Evidently Vanyúsha is right," thought Olénin. "A Tartar is more gentlemanly," and accompanied by Mother Ulítka's curses, he walked out of the cabin. As he was going out, Maryánka, still in her rose-coloured shirt, but

wrapped up to her eyes in a white kerchief, suddenly flashed by him, and out of the vestibule. Rapidly tripping down the steps in her bare feet, she ran away from the entrance, stopped, cast with her smiling eyes a rapid glance upon the young man, and disappeared around the corner of the cabin.

The firm, youthful gait, the wild glance of the sparkling eyes beneath her white kerchief, and the stateliness of the fair maiden's strong frame now produced an even stronger impression upon Olénin. "It must be she!" he thought; and forgetting about his quarters, and all the time looking back at Maryánka, he walked up to Vanyúsha.

"You see, the girl is just as wild!" said Vanyúsha, who was still busy with the cart, but in somewhat better spirits. "She is just like a filly of the steppes. *La femme!*" he added, in a loud and solemn voice, and burst out laughing.

XI.

In the evening the master returned from his fishing expedition; upon discovering that he was to be paid for quarters, he pacified the old woman, and satisfied Vanyúsha's demands.

Everything was arranged in the new home. The proprietors passed over to the "warm" cabin, and, for three roubles a month, turned over the "cold" cabin to the yunker. Olénin took a lunch, and lay down for a nap. He awoke before evening, washed himself, cleaned his clothes, ate his dinner, and, lighting a cigarette, sat down near the window facing the street. The heat had subsided.

The slanting shadow of the cabin, with its carved ridge-piece, lay across the dusty street, and even bent upwards on the lower part of the house opposite. The sloping reed thatch of this house was gleaming in the rays of the setting sun. The air was growing cool. The village was still. The soldiers had found their quarters, and were quiet. The herds had not yet been driven home, and the people had not yet returned from their field labour.

Olénin's quarters were almost at the edge of the village. Now and then, somewhere far beyond the Térek, in the direction from which Olénin had come, could be heard the hollow reports of shots, somewhere in the Chechnyá, or in the Kumýk plain.

Olénin felt at ease after three months of camp life.

His well-washed face felt fresh, his strong body felt clean after the long march, and all his limbs felt strong and rested.

His mind, too, felt fresh and clear. He thought of the expedition, and the past peril. He recalled that he had behaved well during all the perils, that he was not worse than the rest, and that he had been received into the company of brave Caucasians. His Moscow recollections were now God knows where. His old life was wiped out, and a new, an entirely new life, in which no mistakes had yet been committed, began for him. He could, a new man among new people, earn here a new and good opinion of himself. He experienced the youthful feeling of a causeless happiness in life, and, looking now through the window at the boys spinning their tops in the shadow of the house, and now at his new neat lodging, he thought of how pleasantly he would arrange things in this unfamiliar life in the village. He also gazed at the mountains and at the sky, and with all his recollections and dreams mingled the austere feeling of the majesty of Nature. Life had begun differently from what he had expected, when he departed from Moscow, but, nevertheless, surpassing his expectation. The mountains, the mountains, the mountains were in everything he thought and felt.

"He has kissed his dog! He has licked the jug! Uncle Eróshka has kissed his dog!" suddenly cried the Cossack boys who were spinning their tops under the window, running to the lane. "He has kissed his dog! He has sold his dagger for drinks," cried the boys, crowding together and retreating.

These cries were directed to Uncle Eróshka, who, with his gun on his back and some pheasants in his belt, was returning from the hunt.

"It is my sin, boys, my sin!" he said, wildly waving his arms, and looking through the windows of the cabins on both sides of the road. "I have sold my dog for

drinks, it is my sin!" he repeated, apparently angry, but pretending that it made no difference to him.

Olénin was surprised at the boys' treatment of the old hunter, and he was still more struck by the expressive and intelligent face and by the powerful frame of the man whom they called Uncle Eróshka.

"Grandfather! Cossack!" he said, turning to him. "Come here, if you please!"

The old man looked at the window, and stopped.

"Good evening, good man!" he said, raising his cap above his clipped hair.

"Good evening, good man!" answered Olénin. "Why do the boys call that way to you?"

Uncle Eróshka walked up to the window.

"They are teasing me, an old man. That is nothing, I like it. Let them have their fun out of uncle," he said, in the firm singsong intonations, in which respectable old people speak. "Are you the commander of the soldiers?"

"No, I am a yunker. Where did you shoot these pheasants?" Olénin asked him.

"I shot three hens in the woods," answered the old man, turning to the window his broad back, where, with their heads stuck through the belt and staining the mantle, hung three pheasants. "Have you never seen any before?" he asked. "If you want to, you may have two. Here!" and he put two pheasants through the window. "Well, are you a hunter?" he asked him.

"I am, I myself killed four during the march."

"Four? That is a lot!" said the old man, sarcastically. "And are you a toper? Do you drink red wine?"

"Why not? I do like a drink now and then."

"Well, I see you are a fine fellow! We will be friends," said Uncle Eróshka.

"Come in," said Olénin, "and we will have some red wine!"

"I will," said the old man. "Take the pheasants!"

One could see by the old man's face that he took a liking to the yunker; and he immediately understood that he could have a drink without paying for it, and therefore it was all right to present him with two pheasants.

A few minutes later, the form of Uncle Eróshka appeared in the door of the cabin. It was only then that Olénin noticed the whole size and powerful build of the man, even though his cinnamon-coloured face, with its perfectly white long beard, was all furrowed with deep wrinkles of old age and hard labour. The muscles of his legs, arms, and shoulders were as full and firm as in a young man. On his head, deep scars, all healed over, were visible under his short hair. His thick venous neck was covered with checkered folds, as in an ox. His rough hands were all battered and scratched up.

He crossed the threshold with ease and agility, took off his gun and put it in the corner, with a rapid glance surveyed and estimated the private belongings that were lying in the room, and, without stamping his buckskin-clad, slanting feet on the floor, walked into the middle of the room. With him entered into the room a strong and disagreeable odour of red wine, brandy, powder, and clotted blood.

Uncle Eróshka bowed toward the images, straightened out his beard, and, walking up to Olénin, gave him his fat black hand.

"*Koshkildy!*" he said. This means, in Tartar, "We wish you health," or "Peace be with you," as they say.

"*Koshkildy!* I know," answered Olénin, giving him his hand.

"No, you do not know, you do not know the proper way, you fool!" said Uncle Eróshka, reproachfully shaking his head. "When they say '*Koshkildy*' to you, you must answer, '*Allah razi bo sun!* God save you!' That's the way, my father, and not '*Koshkildy!*' I'll

teach you everything. We had a Russian here, by the name of Ilyá Moséich: he and I were chums. He was a fine fellow. Toper, thief, hunter. Oh, what a hunter he was! I taught him everything."

"What are you going to teach me?" asked Olénin, becoming more and more interested in the old man.

"I will take you out hunting; I will teach you to catch fish; I will show the Chechéns to you; and if you want a sweetheart, I will find you one. That's the kind of a man I am! I am a joker!" and the old man burst out laughing. "I will sit down, my father, I am tired. *Karga?*" he added, with an interrogative look.

"What does *karga* mean?" asked Olénin.

"It means 'good' in the Georgian language. I am just saying it; it is a byword of mine, my favourite word. *Karga*, — when I say that, I mean I am joking. Now, father, order up some red wine. Have you a soldier who is serving you? Have you? Iván!" called out the old man. "All your soldiers are named Iván. Is yours Iván, too?"

"That's right, Iván, Vanyúsha! Please get some red wine from the landlord, and bring it here."

"It's all the same, Vanyúsha, or Iván. Why are all your soldiers called Iván? Iván!" repeated the old man. "You ask from the tapped cask. They have the best red wine in the village. Don't give more than thirty kopeks an eighth measure; remember, don't give any more, for she is a hag, and will — Our people are a damned, foolish lot," continued Uncle Eróshka, in a confidential tone, after Vanyúsha had left. "They do not regard you as men. You are worse than a Tartar to them. The Russians they call beggars. But, in my opinion, though you are a soldier, you are a man all the same, and you have a soul in you. Am I not judging right? Ilyá Moséich was a soldier, but what a fine fellow he was! Is it not so, my father? That's why ours do not like me; but

that makes no difference to me. I am a cheerful fellow; I love everybody, — I am Eróshka, that's right, my father!"

And the old man gently slapped the young man on the shoulder.

XII.

In the meantime, Vanyúsha, who had gotten all his house affairs in good order, had been shaved by the company barber, and had taken his trousers out of his bootlegs, as a sign that the company was now lodged in commodious quarters, was now in the best of spirits. He gazed attentively, but not malevolently, at Eróshka, as though he were a strange wild beast, shook his head at the floor which he had soiled, and, taking out from under the bench two empty bottles, went to see the landlady.

"Good evening, my good people!" he said, having decided to be particularly gentle. "My master has told me to buy some red wine. Fill these, good people!"

The old woman did not answer. The maiden was standing in front of a small Tartar mirror, and fixing a kerchief on her head; she looked silently at Vanyúsha.

"I will pay cash, worthy people," said Vanyúsha, rattling the copper coins in his pocket. "You be good, and we will be good, — and that will be best," he added.

"How much?" the old woman asked, curtly.

"An eighth measure."[1]

"Go, my dear, and draw it for them," said Mother Ulítka, turning to her daughter. "Draw it off from the cask that has been tapped, my darling."

The girl took the keys and a decanter, and walked out of the room together with Vanyúsha.

[1] That is, one-eighth of a "bucket," which latter is about two and a half gallons.

"Tell me who is that woman?" asked Olénin, pointing to Maryánka, who was just then passing by the window.

The old man winked, and nudged the young man with his elbow.

"Wait," he said, and leaned out of the window. "Kkhm! Kkhm!" he coughed and bellowed. "Maryánushka! O Maryánka! Love me, my darling! I am a joker," he added, in a whisper, turning to Olénin.

The girl did not turn her head, but, evenly and vigorously swinging her arms, passed by the window with the foppish, dashing gait peculiar to the Cossack women. She only cast a slow glance upon the old man with her black, shaded eyes.

"Love me, and you will be happy!" cried Eróshka, and, winking, looked questioningly at Olénin. "I am a dashing fellow, I am a joker," he added. "She is a queen, eh?"

"A beauty," said Olénin. "Call her up!"

"Not a bit of it!" said the old man. "They are trying to get her married to Lukáshka. Luká is a fine Cossack, a brave, — the other day he killed an abrék. I will find a better one for you. I will find you one that is all dressed in silk and silver. I told you I would get you one, and so I will. I'll find a beauty for you."

"You are an old man, and see what you are saying!" said Olénin. "This is sinful."

"Sinful? Where is the sin?" the old man answered, with determination. "Is it a sin to look at a pretty girl? A sin to stroll with one? A sin to love one? Is it so with you? No, my father, it is not a sin, but a salvation. God has made you, and He has made a girl. He, my friend, has made everything. And so it is not a sin to look at a pretty girl. That's what she is for: to be loved, and to be looked at. That's the way I judge, my good man."

Having crossed the yard and entered into the dark, cool outhouse, filled with casks, Maryánka, with the usual

prayer, walked up to one of them, and put in the siphon. Vanyúsha stood in the door and smiled, looking at her. It seemed very funny to him that she wore nothing but a shirt, which fitted her behind, but was tucked up in front, and still funnier that half-rouble pieces hung down from her neck. He thought that it was un-Russian, and that the people of his village would have a laugh if they saw such a girl. "*La fille comme c'est très bié*, for a change," he thought, "I will say now to my master."

"What are you gaping for, you devil?" suddenly cried the girl. "Let me have your decanter!"

Having filled the decanter with cool red wine, Maryánka handed it to Vanyúsha.

"Give the money to mother!" she said, pushing away Vanyúsha's hand with the money.

Vanyúsha smiled.

"What makes you so angry, my dear people?" he said, good-naturedly shuffling his feet, while the girl closed the cask.

She began to laugh.

"And are you kind people?"

"My master and I are very kind people," Vanyúsha replied, convincingly. "We are such kind people that wherever we have lived the people have been grateful to us. Because, you see, he is a nobleman."

The girl stopped and listened.

"Is he married, your master?" she asked.

"No! Our master is young and a bachelor. Because, you see, noblemen can never marry young," Vanyúsha replied, instructively.

"What do I know? He is as fat as a buffalo, and too young to marry! Is he the commander of the whole lot of you?" she asked.

"My master is a yunker, that means, not yet an officer. But he knows a lot more than a general, or any big man. Because, you see, not only our colonel, but the Tsar him-

self knows him," Vanyúsha explained, proudly. "We are not like any other military trash, but our master's father was a senator. He had a thousand souls, or more, and they send us a thousand roubles at a time. And that's why they always like us. Take many a captain, and he has no money. So what's the use?"

"Go, I want to lock up," the girl interrupted him.

Vanyúsha brought the wine, and he announced to Olénin that "*La fille c'est très joulie*," and immediately went away, with his stupid laugh.

XIII.

In the meantime, they were beating the tattoo in the square. The people were returning from their work. The herds were lowing in the gates, crowding together in a dusty, gold-like cloud, and the girls and women were bustling in the streets and yards, driving the cattle to their stalls.

The sun had entirely disappeared behind the distant snow-capped range. A bluish shadow was stretched out over the earth and sky. Over the darkling gardens the stars were barely gleaming, and the sounds slowly died down in the village. After housing their cattle, the Cossack women congregated in the corners of the streets, and sat down on the mounds, cracking pumpkin seeds. Maryánka joined one of these circles, after she had milked her two cows and the buffalo.

The circle consisted of a few women and girls, and one old Cossack.

They were talking about the dead abrék. The Cossack told the story, and the women asked him questions.

"I suppose he will get a good reward for it," said a Cossack woman.

"I should say so. They say they will send him a cross. Mosév did not treat him right. He took away his gun, but the authorities in Kizlyár found out about it."

"He is a mean fellow, that Mosév."

"I have heard them say that Lukáshka is here," said a girl.

"He and Nazárka are on a spree at Yámka's."

(Yámka was an unmarried, dissolute woman, who kept a saloon.)

"They say they have drunk half a bucket."

"Now that was a piece of luck for the 'Saver'!" said some one. "He is indeed a 'Saver'! I must say he is a fine fellow! Awfully clever! As brave as can be! His father, Kiryák, was a brave man, too! And he is just like his father. When he was killed, the whole village wept for him. There they are coming, I think," continued the speaker, pointing to the Cossacks who were moving in the street toward them. "Ergushóv is along with them. What a toper he is!"

Lukáshka, Nazárka, and Ergushóv, having emptied half a bucket, were walking to the girls. They were all redder in their faces than usual; particularly Cossack Ergushóv staggered along and, laughing loudly, kept punching Nazárka in his sides.

"Wenches, why don't you sing songs?" he shouted to the girls. "I say, sing for our amusement!"

"Have you passed a pleasant day? Have you passed a pleasant day?" were heard the greetings.

"What singing! Is this a holiday?" said a woman. "You are puffed up, so sing yourself!"

Ergushóv laughed out loud, and punched Nazárka. "Start a song, and I will sing, too. I am clever at that, I say."

"Well, beauties, are you asleep?" said Nazárka. "We have come from the cordon to have something to drink. And we have drunk to Lukáshka's good luck."

Lukáshka walked up to the circle, leisurely raised his lambskin cap, and stopped opposite the girls. His broad cheeks and his neck were flushed. He stood there and spoke softly and gravely; but in the deliberation and gravity of his movements there was more animation and strength than in Nazárka's prattle and bustle. He reminded one of a playful colt which raises its tail and

snorts, and then suddenly stops as though fastened to the ground by all its feet. Lukáshka stood quietly before the girls; his eyes were smiling; he said little, and looked now at his drunken companions, and now at the girls. When Maryánka came to the corner, he raised his cap with an even, leisurely motion, stepped aside, and again planted himself in front of her, lightly spreading his legs, thrusting his thumbs into the belt, and playing with his dagger. Maryánka returned his greeting by a gentle inclination of her head, sat down on the mound, and took some seeds out of the bosom of her shirt. Lukáshka looked at Maryánka, without turning his eyes away from her, and, cracking seeds, kept spitting out the shells. Everybody grew silent when Maryánka joined them.

"Well, are you going to stay long?" asked a woman, breaking the silence.

"Until to-morrow morning," Lukáshka answered, gravely.

"Well, God grant you a good advantage!" said the old Cossack. "I am glad. I have just been talking about you."

"And I say so, too," said drunken Ergushóv, laughing. "There are some guests here!" he added, pointing to a soldier who was passing by. "Soldiers' brandy is good. I like it!"

"They have sent us three devils," said a woman. "Grandfather went to the village elder's office, but they said that nothing could be done."

"Oh, so you have found out what woe is!" said Ergushóv.

"I suppose they have dirtied up your house with tobacco," said another woman. "Let them smoke all they want to in the yard, but I won't let them in the house. Even if the elder should come, I would not let them. They will steal, too. Look at the elder, that son of a devil! He has not quartered any soldiers upon himself."

"You don't like them!" again said Ergushóv.

"And they say that the girls have to make the beds for the soldiers, and fill them with red wine and mead," said Názárka, spreading his legs like Lukáshka, and poising his cap jauntily, too.

Ergushóv roared and grasped and embraced a girl who was sitting nearest to him. "I tell you, it is so."

"Keep off, you pitch!" screamed the girl. "I will tell my mother."

"Tell her!" he cried. "But really, Názárka is telling the truth: there was a circular letter about it, and he can read. That's so." And he was trying to hug another girl, the next one in order.

"Don't be so familiar, scamp!" laughingly shrieked ruddy, round-faced Ústenka, raising her hand to box his ears.

The Cossack stepped aside and almost fell.

"And they say that a girl has no strength. She almost killed me."

"You are regular pitch. The devil has brought you from the cordon," said Ústenka, and, turning away from him, snorted out with a laugh: "You sleepyhead, you have missed an abrék! He would have cut your throat, and that would have been well."

"You would have blubbered!" Názárka said, and laughed.

"Just watch me blubbering!"

"You see, she does not even care. Would she weep? Názárka, eh?" said Ergushóv.

Lukáshka was all the time gazing silently at Maryánka. His glance evidently embarrassed the girl.

"Say, Maryánka, have they quartered a commander on you?" he asked, moving up to her.

Maryánka, as usual, did not answer at once, and leisurely lifted her eyes on the Cossacks. Lukáshka's eyes were smiling, as though something special, quite different from

the conversation, were taking place between him and the girl.

"Yes, they are all right, for they have two cabins," said an old woman for Maryánka, "but at Fomúshkin's they have lodged their commander, and they say he has so filled up the room with his things that the Fomúshkins have no place left. Who has ever heard such a thing? They have driven a whole horde of them into the village! What is to be done?" she said. "And they will act here worse than the black plague!"

"They say they are going to build a bridge across the Térek," said one of the girls.

"And they told me," said Nazárka, walking up to Ústenka, "that they will dig a ditch to put the girls in, because they do not love young fellows." And again he made his favourite bow, at which all laughed, and Ergushóv immediately started to hug an old woman, passing by Maryánka, who was next in order.

"Why don't you hug Maryánka? Take them all in order!" said Nazárka.

"No, my old woman is sweeter," cried the Cossack, kissing the struggling woman.

"He will choke me to death!" she cried, laughing.

The even tramp of steps at the end of the street interrupted the laughter. Three soldiers, in overcoats, with guns across their shoulders, were keeping step, as they walked to relieve the guard at the company's chest.

The corporal, an old bachelor, looked angrily at the Cossacks, and led the soldiers in such a way that Lukáshka and Nazárka, who were standing in the road, should be obliged to step aside. Nazárka moved away, but Lukáshka only blinked and turned his head and broad back, and did not stir.

"People are standing here, so you walk around," he said, looking askance, and contemptuously shaking his head to the soldiers.

The soldiers passed by in silence, keeping step in the dusty road.

Maryánka laughed, and so did all the girls after her.

"What gallant lads!" said Nazárka. "Just like long-skirted chanters!" And he marched down the street, in order to mock them.

They all burst out laughing again.

Lukáshka slowly walked up to Maryánka.

"Where is your officer stationed?" he asked.

Maryánka thought awhile.

"We gave them the new cabin," she said.

"Is he old or young?" asked Lukáshka, sitting down near her.

"Do you suppose I have asked him?" answered the girl. "I went to fetch some red wine for him, and saw him through the window with Uncle Eróshka, — he is a red-haired fellow. They have brought a whole cartload of things."

And she lowered her eyes.

"I am so glad that I had a chance to get leave of absence from the cordon!" said Lukáshka, moving up nearer to the girl on the mound, and all the time watching her eyes.

"Well, how long are you going to stay?" asked Maryánka, slightly smiling.

"Till to-morrow morning. Give me some seeds!" he added, stretching out his hand.

Maryánka was all smiles, and opened the collar of her shirt.

"Don't take them all," she said.

"Truly, I was very lonely without you, upon my word," Lukáshka said, calmly, in a quiet whisper, taking the seeds out of the bosom of the girl's shirt; and, bending still closer to her, he began to tell her something in a whisper, with smiling eyes.

"I won't come, that's all," Maryánka suddenly exclaimed, turning away from him.

"Truly — I wanted to tell you something," whispered Lukáshka. "Upon my word! Do come, Maryánka!"

Maryánka shook her head in refusal, but smiling.

"Sister Maryánka! O sister! Mother is calling you to supper," cried Maryánka's little brother, running up to the women.

"I'll be there in a minute," answered the girl. "Go, my dear, go by yourself! I am coming."

Lukáshka rose and raised his hat.

"I guess I had better go home myself," he said, pretending to be indifferent, but with difficulty repressing a smile. He disappeared around the corner of the house.

In the meantime, night had entirely descended upon the village. The bright stars were gleaming in the dark heaven. The streets were dark and deserted. Nazárka remained with the women on the mound, and their laughter could be heard; but Lukáshka, having softly walked away from the girls, crouched like a cat, and suddenly, holding his dangling dagger, began to run, noiselessly, not to his house, but in the direction of the ensign's cabin. Having run along two streets and turned into a lane, he lifted his mantle and seated himself on the ground in the shadow of a fence.

"Just look at the ensign's daughter!" he thought of Maryánka. "She will not have any fun, the devil! My time will come."

The steps of an approaching woman distracted his thoughts. He began to listen and to smile to himself. Maryánka, with drooping head, was walking with rapid and even steps straight toward him, striking with a stick against the pickets of a fence. Lukáshka rose a little. Maryánka was startled, and stopped.

"Accursed devil! You have frightened me. You did not go home," she said, laughing loud.

Lukáshka embraced the girl with one hand, and with the other he touched her face.

"I wanted to tell you — upon my word!" his voice was quivering and broken.

"What talk have you found for the night?" answered Maryánka. "Mother is waiting for me, and you had better go to your mistress."

Having freed herself from his arms, she ran a few steps ahead. When she reached the fence of her yard, she stopped and turned to the Cossack who was running by her side, still persuading her to stay an hour with him.

"Well, what is it you wanted to say, you night-bird?" and she laughed again.

"Do not make fun of me, Maryánka! Upon my word! What if I have a mistress? The devil take her! You just say the word, and I will love you so! I will do anything you want me to. Do you hear?" (He jingled the money in his pocket.) "Now we will have a fine time. Other people are enjoying themselves, but how about me? I get no pleasure from you, Maryánushka!"

The girl did not reply. She stood before him, and, with the rapid motion of her fingers, broke the stick into small pieces.

Lukáshka suddenly clinched his fists and set his teeth.

"Why should I be waiting all the time? Do I not love you, my dear? Do anything you please with me!" he suddenly said, frowning angrily, and seizing both her hands.

Maryánka did not change the calm expression of her countenance and voice.

"Don't be so bold, Lukáshka, but listen to me!" she answered, without tearing her hands away, but pushing him aside. "Of course, I am a girl, but you listen to me! I cannot do as I please, but if you love me, I will tell you something. You let my hands go, and I will tell you. I

will marry you, but you will not live to see me do foolish things," said Maryánka, without turning her face away.

"As to marrying, — it is not in my power. Maryánka, I want you to love me," said Lukáshka, suddenly changing his gloomy and ferocious manner to one of gentleness, submission, and tenderness. He smiled, and looked her straight in the eyes.

Maryánka pressed close to him and gave him a smacking kiss on his lips,

"My darling!" she whispered, passionately embracing him. Then, suddenly tearing herself away, she ran, and, without turning around, walked through the gate of her house,

Maryánka did not stop, in spite of the Cossack's request to wait another minute, and to hear what he had to say.

"Go on! They will see us!" she said. "Look there, I think I see the devil of a lodger walking in the yard."

"The ensign's daughter," Lukáshka thought to himself, "will marry me! Marrying is all right, but you love me!"

He found Nazárka at Yámka's. After celebrating together, he went to Dunáyka and, in spite of her infidelity, remained there over night.

XIV.

OLÉNIN was actually in the yard when Maryánka came in through the gate, and he heard her say, "The devil of a lodger is walking." All that evening he had passed with Uncle Eróshka on the porch of his new lodging. He had ordered a table, a samovár, wine, a burning candle to be brought out, and, while drinking his tea and smoking a cigar, he listened to the stories of the old man, who was seated at his feet on the steps.

Though the air was calm, the candle guttered, and the light flickered in all directions, illuminating now the post of the porch, now the table and dishes, now the white clipped head of the old man. Night-moths flitted about and, shedding the dust from their wings, dashed against the table and the glasses, or flew into the candle-light, or disappeared in the darkness of the air, beyond the illuminated circle.

Olénin and Eróshka emptied together five bottles of red wine. Eróshka always filled the glasses, and, giving one to Olénin, drank to his health, and talked without cessation. He told him about the former life of the Cossacks, about his father, "The Broad," who used to carry on his shoulders a boar's carcass weighing four hundred pounds, and to drink two buckets of wine at one sitting. He told of his own young days, and of his friend Girchík, with whom he used to haul felt mantles across the Térek, during the black plague. He told him of one of his hunts when he killed two stags in one morning. He told him of his mistress who used to run after him at night to

the cordon. And he told all this so eloquently and picturesquely that Olénin did not notice how the time was passing.

"That's the way it is, my father," he said. "You did not know me during my golden time, or I would have shown you everything. To-day Eróshka has licked the pitcher, but formerly Eróshka's fame thundered through the army. Who had the best horse? Who had a Gurdá sabre? To whom did they go to get a drink, or have a spree? Who was sent into the mountains to kill Akhmét-khan? Always Eróshka! Whom did the girls love? Always Eróshka, because I was a genuine brave. I was a toper and thief, and used to steal the herds in the mountains, and I was a singer, too: I could do anything. There are no such Cossacks nowadays. It makes you feel bad to look at them. They are no taller than this" (Eróshka pointed to about three feet from the ground) "when they put on some stupid boots, and do nothing but look at them in glee. Or they puff themselves up with wine; and they do not drink like men, but God knows how. And who was I? I was Eróshka the thief; I was known not only in the villages, but in the mountains as well. I had chums among princes. I was friendly with everybody. Whether Tartar, or Armenian, or soldier, or officer, — it was all the same to me, so long as he was a tippler. 'You,' he says, 'must cleanse yourself from foul contact: do not drink with the soldiers, do not eat with the Tartars!'"

"Who says that?" asked Olénin.

"Our chanters say so. But just listen to a Tartar mullah or kadi. He says, 'You infidel Giaours, why do you eat pork?' So everybody keeps his own law. But, in my opinion, it is all one. God has made everything for man to enjoy. There is no sin in anything. Take an example from a wild animal. He lives in the Tartar reeds as well as in ours. Wherever he goes is his home.

What God has given him, he devours. And ours say that we shall have to lick the frying-pans for that? But I think it is all false," he added, after a silence.

"What is false?" asked Olénin.

"What the chanters say. In Chérvlenaya, my father, the army elder was a chum of mine. He was a fine fellow, just like me. They killed him in the Chechnyá country. He used to say that the chanters got that all out of their own heads. 'You give up the ghost,' he would say, 'and the grass will grow out on your little mound, and that is all.'" The old man laughed. "He was a desperate fellow."

"How old are you?" asked Olénin.

"God knows! Seventy or more. When you had a Tsarítsa, I was a grown-up lad. So figure out how much it is! Will that make seventy?"

"Yes. But you are still a fine fellow."

"Well, thank the Lord, I am well, entirely well; only a hag of a woman has ruined me—"

"How so?"

"Just ruined me—"

"When you die, will the grass grow over you?" Olénin repeated his words.

Eróshka evidently did not wish to elucidate his meaning. He kept silent for a moment.

"And what did you think? Drink!" he cried, smiling, and giving him a glass of wine.

XV.

"So, what was I saying?" he continued, trying to collect his thoughts. "That's the kind of man I am! I am a hunter. There is no other hunter in the whole army to match me. I will find and show to you every kind of animal, and every kind of bird; I know where everything is. I have dogs, and two guns, and nets, and a snare, and a hawk, — I have everything, thank God! If you are a genuine hunter, and not given to boasting, I will show you everything. This is what I am! If I find a track, I at once know what animal it belongs to; and I know where it lies down, and where it comes to drink, or to wallow. I sit the whole night on a scaffolding and watch, — what's the use of staying at home! I would only commit a sin, and puff myself up with drink. And the women come around and prattle, and the children scream: it is enough to make one crazy. So I go out at twilight, choose a nice place, press down the reeds, and sit down, good fellow that I am, and wait for things to happen. I know everything that is going on in the woods. I look at the sky, and see the stars moving; and I look at them to find out the time. I look around, — the forest is rustling, and I am waiting for something to crash, and for a wild boar to come to his wallow. I hear the squeaking of young eagles, and the noises of the cocks and geese in the village. If it is the geese, — it is not midnight yet. And I know all that. And if I hear the report of a gun somewhere in the distance, I think who has been shooting. Is it a Cossack

who has been lying in wait for an animal, just as I am lying? And has he killed him, or has he only wounded him, and will the beast go through the reeds, leaving a track of blood, without being found? I do not like that! Oh, I do not like that! Why has he ruined an animal? Fool! Fool! Or I think, 'Maybe an abrék has killed some silly young Cossack!' All that passes through my mind. Once I was sitting near the water, and I saw a cradle carried down the river. It was in good condition, only the edge was broken off. Then the thought came to me, whose cradle it was. And I thought your devilish soldiers must have gone to some native village, where they raped the Chechén women, and one devil grabbed a baby by the legs, and banged it against the corner of the house. Don't they do such things? Oh, some people have no souls! And then all kinds of thoughts came to me, and I felt sorry for them. It occurred to me that they might have thrown away the cradle, and driven the woman off, and burnt the house, and that the Chechén brave picked up his musket and went out ravaging on our side. And so I sit and think. And when I hear a herd in the thicket, my heart goes pit-a-pat. Come up, dear ones! And I am afraid they will scent me, and I sit without stirring, and my heart is in a flutter, and it almost lifts me up bodily. Last spring a fine herd came up, and it looked black. 'To the Father and the Son —' and I was about to shoot. Then she grunted at her young ones, as much as to say, 'Look out, children, a man is sitting there,' and they crashed through the brush. And there she had been so close to me that I almost could have bitten into her."

"How did the sow tell her young ones that a man was sitting there?" asked Olénin.

"What did you think? Did you think that the beasts are stupid? No, they are more intelligent than man, even though it be a boar. They know everything. Let

us take this example: a man walks along an animal's trail and does not notice it, but when a boar strikes your trail, he scents you at once, and off he makes; evidently he has sense enough to discover your scent while you cannot even perceive your own. And why not? You want to kill him, but he wants to disport himself in the woods. You have your law, and he has his. He is a boar, but he is not worse than you; he is God's creature, too. Pshaw! Man is stupid, stupid, stupid!" The old man repeated these words several times, and, lowering his head, fell to musing.

Olénin, too, was pensive, and, walking down the steps, silently paced the yard, with his arms behind his back.

When Eróshka awoke from his reverie, he raised his head and began to gaze steadily at the night-moths which were circling around the quivering candle-light and falling into it.

"Fool! Fool!" he said. "Whither do you fly? Fool! Fool!" He raised himself and began to drive off the moths with his stout fingers.

"You will burn yourself, little fool! Fly thither, here is room enough," he uttered, in a tender voice, trying carefully to catch it by its wings with his stout fingers, and to liberate it again. "You are destroying yourself, and I am sorry for you."

He remained sitting for a long time, and drinking from the bottle. But Olénin continued to pace the yard. Suddenly he was attracted by a whisper on the other side of the gate. Involuntarily holding his breath, he could make out a woman's laugh, a man's voice, and the sound of a kiss. He purposely shuffled his feet on the grass, and walked over to the other side of the yard. But a little while later the wicker fence creaked. A Cossack, in a dark mantle and white lambskin cap (it was Lukáshka), walked along the fence, and a tall woman in a white kerchief passed by Olénin.

"I have nothing to do with you, and you nothing with me," Maryánka's firm gait seemed to say. He followed her with his eyes up to the steps of the cabin, and saw her through the window taking off her kerchief and sitting down on a bench. And suddenly the feeling of pining, of indistinct desires and hopes, and of a certain envy toward some one took possession of the young man's soul.

The last lights in the cabins were extinguished. The last sounds died down in the village. And the wicker fences, and the white cattle in the yards, and the thatches of the houses, and the slender poplars, — everything seemed to sleep a healthy, tranquil sleep after its hard labours. Only the uninterrupted dinning of the frogs reached the intent ear from the moist places in the distance. The stars were less abundant in the east, and seemed to melt away in the growing light. Overhead they receded farther and farther, and became ever more abundant.

The old man had fallen asleep, leaning on his arm. A cock crowed in the yard across the street. But Olénin continued to walk, lost in thought. He walked up to the fence and began to listen. Some young Cossacks were tuning a merry song, and above them rose especially one shrill, youthful voice.

"Do you know who it is that is singing there?" said the old man, upon awaking. "It is Lukáshka the Brave. He has killed a Chechén, and so he is celebrating. And what is he rejoicing over, fool?"

"Have you killed any people?" asked Olénin.

The old man suddenly raised himself on both elbows and moved his face close to Olénin's.

"Devil!" he cried to him. "Why do you ask? One must not speak of this. It is a very clever thing to kill a man. Oh, so clever! Good-bye, my father, I have had enough to eat and to drink," he said, rising. "Shall I come to-morrow to take you out hunting?"

"Do come!"

"Be sure and get up early, or there will be a fine."

"Don't be afraid! I will get up before you," answered Olénin.

The old man went away. The song was finished. Footsteps and merry talking could be heard. A little later the singing began once more, but farther away, and Eróshka's loud voice joined the former voices.

"What people! What a life!" thought Olénin, sighing, and alone returned to his room.

XVI.

UNCLE ERÓSHKA was a lonely Cossack, out of service. His wife had become an Orthodox Christian twenty years before, and, having run away from him, had married a Russian sergeant. He had no children. It was not an idle boast, when he said that he had been the bravest man in the village. He had been known throughout the army for his old-fashioned deeds of bravery. He had upon his conscience more than one murder of Chechéns and Russians. He used to go to the mountains, had stolen from the Russians, and had been twice in jail. The greater part of his life he passed in hunting and in the forest, where, for days at a time, he ate nothing but a piece of bread, and drank nothing but water. But when he returned to the village, he went on a spree from the morning to the evening.

After returning home from Olénin he went to sleep for about two hours. He awoke long before daybreak, and lay on his bed and tried to form an opinion of the man whose acquaintance he had made the evening before. He was very much pleased with Olénin's *simplicity* (which simplicity consisted in letting him have all the wine he wanted). And he was pleased with Olénin himself. He was wondering why all the Russians were *simple* and rich, and why they knew nothing, and yet were learned men. He was meditating over these questions, and also considering what to ask of Olénin.

Uncle Eróshka's cabin was quite large and not old;

but the absence of a woman was visible in everything. In spite of the usual care which the Cossacks bestow upon their house, his best room was filthy and in the greatest disorder. On the table were thrown his blood-stained coat, one half of a milk cake, and next to it a plucked and dismembered jackdaw to feed his hawk with. On the benches lay scattered his buckskin shoes, a gun, a dagger, a pouch, wet clothes, and rags. In the corner, in a tub of dirty, ill-smelling water, another pair of buckskins was soaking. On the floor were flung a net and a few dead pheasants; and near the table promenaded a chicken with one of its legs fettered, and tapping on the dirty floor. In the cold oven stood a clay pot filled with some kind of a milky liquid. On the oven screamed a falcon, which tried to tear itself away from its cord, and a moulting hawk sat solemnly on the edge, looking askance at the chicken, and now and then bending its head from right to left. Uncle Eróshka himself lay on his back on a bed which had been built in between the oven and the wall; he wore nothing but a shirt, and, resting his muscular legs on the oven, was picking with his stout fingers the scabs on his hands which had been scratched up by the hawk, for he was in the habit of handling him without gloves. The air of the whole room, but especially in the neighbourhood of the old man, was saturated by that strong but disagreeable and mixed odour which always accompanied him.

"*Uyde-ma*" (that is, at home), "uncle?" He heard in the window a shrill voice which he at once recognized as belonging to his neighbour Lukáshka.

"*Uyde, uyde, uyde!* At home, come in!" cried the old man. "Neighbour Márka, Luká Márka, what brings you to uncle? Are you going back to the cordon?"

The hawk was startled by his master's voice, and flapped its wings, tugging at its fetters.

The old man was fond of Lukáshka, and he excluded

him alone from the contempt which he felt for the whole young generation of Cossacks. Besides, Lukáshka and his mother, being his neighbours, frequently gave him wine, boiled cream, and other domestic products, which Eróshka did not possess. Uncle Eróshka, who was all his life carried away by one thing or another, always gave a practical explanation to his impulses: "Well? They are people of means," he said to himself. "I will bring them some venison or a hen, and they will not forget uncle: they will bring him a pie or cakes now and then."

"Good morning, Márka! I am glad to see you," the old man cried, merrily, and, with a rapid motion throwing down his bare legs from the bed, jumped up, made two or three steps over the creaking floor, looked at his bandy legs, and suddenly found them very funny; he smiled, gave one stamp with his bare heel, and then a second stamp, and struck an attitude.

"Did I do it smartly?" he asked, his small eyes sparkling with delight.

Lukáshka barely smiled.

"Are you going back to the cordon?" the old man asked.

"I have brought you some red wine which I had promised you at the cordon."

"Christ save you!" said the old man; he picked up his wide trousers and half-coat, put them on, girded himself with a strap, poured some water from a clay pot on his hands, wiped them against some old trousers, with a piece of a comb straightened out his beard, and stood up in front of Lukáshka. "I am ready," he said.

Lukáshka took a wine-glass, wiped it, filled it with wine, and, sitting down on a bench, offered it to the old man.

"To your health! To the Father and the Son!" said the old man, with solemnity receiving the wine. "May all

your wishes be fulfilled! May you be a brave, and earn a cross!"

Lukáshka, too, uttered a prayer, drank his wine, and put the glass on the table. The old man rose, brought a dried fish, put it on the threshold, broke it with a stick, so as to soften it, and, laying it with his shrivelled hands on his one blue plate, placed it on the table.

"I have everything, even a lunch, thank God!" he said, proudly. "Well, how is it with Mosév?" the old man asked.

Lukáshka told him how the under-officer had taken away his gun, apparently trying to get the old man's opinion of the matter.

"Don't stand out for the gun," said the old man. "If you will not give the gun, you will not get a reward."

"But, uncle! What reward can there be for an unmounted Cossack? And it was a fine gun, a Crimean one, and it is worth eighty roubles."

"Oh, let it go! I once had a quarrel with the captain: he wanted my horse. 'Give me your horse,' he said, 'and I will recommend you for an ensign.' I did not give it to him, and so nothing came of it."

"But here, uncle! I shall have to buy a horse, and they say I can't get one across the river for less than fifty roubles. Mother has not yet sold her wine."

"Ah, we did not worry about such matters!" said the old man. "When Uncle Eróshka was of your age, he stole whole herds from the Nogáys, and drove them across the Térek. Many a time I swapped a first-class horse for a bottle of brandy or for a felt mantle."

"Why did you give it so cheap?" said Lukáshka.

"Fool, fool, Márka!" the old man said, contemptuously. "How could it be otherwise? That is what you are stealing for, — not to be stingy. I suppose you people have not even seen how horses are driven. Why don't you talk?"

"What shall I say, uncle?" said Lukáshka. "We are evidently a different lot."

"Fool, fool, Márka! A different lot!" answered the old man, mocking the young Cossack. "At your age I was no such Cossack."

"How was it?" asked Lukáshka.

The old man contemptuously shook his head.

"Uncle Eróshka was simple, he was not stingy. And so the whole Chechnyá were my friends. If a chum of mine came to see me, I filled him full of brandy, calmed him down, and put him to bed with me; and whenever I called on him I took some candy to him for a present. That is the way people used to act, and not as now; the only amusement young chaps have is to crack seeds, and spit out the shells," the old man concluded, contemptuously, imitating the way the Cossacks of the present time crack seeds and spit out the shells.

"I know that," said Lukáshka. "It is so!"

"If you want to be a fine fellow, you must be a brave, and not a peasant. And it is only a peasant that buys a horse by counting out the money, and taking the horse for it."

They were silent.

"But it is dull without a horse, uncle, both in the village and at the cordon; and you can't go anywhere to have some fun. They are all such timid people. Even Nazárka. The other day we were in the native village; Giréy-khan wanted us to go with him into the Nogáy country for horses, but no one would go; how could I go myself?"

"And what about uncle? Do you think I am dried up? No, I am not. Give me a horse, and I will go at once into the Nogáy country."

"What is the use of wasting words?" said Lukáshka. "You tell me whether I may trust Giréy-khan? He says, 'Just take the horses as far as the Térek, and there

I will find a place for them, even if there be a whole drove.' He is one of those that shave their heads, so I do not know whether I can believe him."

"You may believe Girév-khan. His whole family are good people; his father was a trusty friend. Only take your uncle's advice, for I will not advise you badly: make him take an oath, then it will be all right. And when you go with him, always have your pistol ready, particularly when you divide the horses. Once I came very near being killed by a Chechén, when I asked him ten roubles for a horse. You may believe him, but do not lie down without a gun."

Lukáshka listened attentively to the old man.

"Uncle, I have heard them say that you have the burst-grass," he said, after a moment's silence.

"I have not the burst-grass, but I will teach you how to get it: you are a good fellow, and you never forget the uncle. Shall I teach you?"

"Yes, uncle."

"You know the turtle? Well, she is a devil, the turtle is!"

"Of course I know!"

"Find her nest, and make a little wattled fence around it, so that she cannot get through. So she will come, will circle around, and go back again; she will find the burst-grass, will bring it, and break the fence with it. You get there early in the morning, and watch: where it is broken, there lies the burst-grass. Pick it up, and take it wherever you please. There will be no lock and no wall against you!"

"Have you tried it, uncle?"

"No, I have not, but good people have told me of it. I only had an incantation. I used to say the 'Hail to Thee,' whenever I mounted my horse. No one ever killed me."

"What is that 'Hail to Thee,' uncle?"

"Don't you know it? What a people! That's right, ask uncle for it. Listen! Say after me:

"'Hail to Thee, who art living in Zion.
He is your King.
We will mount the horse.
Sophonius weeps.
Zacharias speaks.
Father Pilgrim
Lover-over of men.'

"Lover-over of men," repeated the old man. "Do you know it? Tell it!"

Lukáshka laughed.

"Well, uncle, is this why you were not killed? Maybe."

"You are getting too clever. You learn it, and repeat it. It will do you no harm. When you sing the 'Pilgrim,' you are all right," and the old man laughed himself. "Still, Lukáshka, don't go to the Nogáy country, that's what I tell you!"

"Why not?"

"This is not the time, and you are not the people for it. You Cossacks have turned into a dungheap. And then there are such a lot of Russians here! They will put you in jail. Truly, give it up. You are not the people for it! Now, Girchík and I —"

And the old man began to tell his endless stories.

But Lukáshka looked out of the window.

"It is daylight now, uncle," he interrupted him. "It is time for me to go; come and see us sometime."

"Christ save you! I will go to the officer; I have promised to take him out hunting. He seems to be a good man."

XVII

From Eróshka's Lukáshka went home. As he was going back, a damp mist had risen from the ground and shrouded the village. The cattle could not be seen, but were heard stirring in all directions. The cocks called each other more frequently and more noisily. The air grew more transparent, and people were getting up. Coming close to his home, Lukáshka made out the fence, wet from the mist, the porch of the cabin, and the open stall. In the yard the sound of wood-chopping could be heard though the mist. Lukáshka walked into the cabin. His mother was up and, standing in front of the oven, was throwing some billets of wood into it. His young sister was still asleep on the bed.

"Well, Lukáshka, have you had your spree?" his mother asked, quietly. "Where were you last night?"

"In the village," her son answered, unwillingly, getting his musket out of the case, and examining it.

His mother shook her head.

Having put some powder on the pan, Lukáshka took down the pouch, drew from it several empty shells, and began to fill the cartridges, carefully closing them up with a small bullet wrapped in a rag. He pulled out the filled cartridges with his teeth, and examined them, and then put away the pouch.

"Well, mother, I told you to fix the bags. Have you mended them?" he said.

"Of course! The dumb girl mended them last night. Is it time for you to go back to the cordon? I have not had a chance to see you."

"The moment I am all ready, I have to go," replied Lukáshka, tying up the powder-bag. "Where is the dumb girl? Has she gone out?"

"I think she is splitting wood. She has been worrying about you all the time. 'I shall not see him,' she said. She pointed with her hand to her face, and clicked and pressed her heart with her hand, as much as to say, 'It is a pity.' Shall I call her? She has understood all about the abrék."

"Call her," said Lukáshka. "I had somewhere some lard, bring it to me. I must grease my sabre."

The old woman went out, and a few minutes later Lukáshka's dumb sister walked over the creaking steps into the room. She was six years older than her brother, and would have resembled him remarkably, but for the dull and coarsely changeable expression of the face, which is common to all the deaf and dumb. Her attire consisted of a coarse shirt in patches; her feet were bare and dirty; on her head she wore a blue kerchief. Her neck, arms, and face were as muscular as a peasant's. It was evident from her garb, and from everything, that she always did a hard man's labour. She brought in an armful of wood which she threw down near the oven. Then she walked up to her brother, with a happy smile, which wrinkled up her whole face, touched him by the shoulder, and began to make rapid signs to him with her hands, her face, and her whole body.

"Well done, well done! A fine girl, Stépka!" replied her brother, shaking his head. "You have fixed everything, and mended it, you are a fine girl! Here is something for it!" He took out of his pocket two honey-cakes, and gave them to her.

The dumb girl blushed, and made a wild noise, to express her joy. She took the cakes, and began more rapidly still to make the signs, pointing often in one direction, and passing her stout finger over her brow and

face. Lukáshka understood her, and nodded, smiling softly. She was telling him that her brother ought to have treated the girls, and that the girls liked him, and that the girl Maryánka was better than any of them, and that she loved him. She indicated Maryánka by pointing rapidly in the direction of her yard, and to her brows and face, smacking her lips, and shaking her head. "She loves you," she said by pressing her hand to her breast, kissing her hand, and as though hugging something. The mother returned to the room, and when she saw what the dumb girl was saying she smiled and shook her head. The dumb girl showed her the honey-cakes, and again shouted for joy.

"I told Ulítka the other day that I would send a go-between," said the mother. "She received my remarks kindly."

Lukáshka looked silently at his mother.

"But, mother, you must take down the wine! I need a horse."

"I will take it down when I have time. I will fix the casks," said the mother, obviously not wishing to have her son meddle with domestic affairs. "When you go," said the old woman to her son, "take along the bag in the vestibule. I have borrowed from people to let you have something at the cordon. Or shall I put it in the saddle-bag?"

"Very well," replied Lukáshka. "If Giréy-khan from across the river comes to see me, send him to the cordon, for they won't let me off for quite awhile. I have some business with him."

He was getting ready.

"I will send him, Lukáshka, I will. So you have been celebrating at Yámka's, I suppose?" said the old woman. "When I got up in the night to attend to the cattle, I thought I heard your voice singing."

Lukáshka did not reply. He walked out into the

vestibule, slung the bags across his shoulder, tucked up his coat, picked up the gun, and stopped on the threshold.

"Good-bye, mother!" he said to her, closing the gate after him. "Send me a keg with Nazárka. I have promised the boys; he will come to see you."

"Christ save you, Lukáshka! God be with you! I will send you, from the new cask," answered the old woman, walking up to the fence. "Listen to what I have to say," she added, bending over the fence.

The Cossack stopped.

"You have been celebrating here! Well, God be praised! Why is a young man not to have a good time? Well, God has granted you a piece of good luck. But, down there, look out, my son, don't do it — Keep on the good side of the officer! You must not do otherwise! I will sell the wine, and will save the money for the horse, and will get you the girl in marriage."

"Very well, very well!" said the son, frowning.

The dumb girl shouted to attract his attention. She pointed to her head and hand, which meant, "A shaven head, — a Chechén." Then, frowning, she did as though she aimed with a gun, cried out, or rather crowed, shaking her head. She was telling Lukáshka to kill another Chechén.

Lukáshka understood her. He smiled, and with light steps, holding the gun on his back, below the felt mantle, disappeared in the dense mist.

The old woman stood awhile silently at the gate, then returned to the hut, and at once went to work.

XVIII.

LUKÁSHKA went to the cordon. At the same time Uncle Eróshka whistled to his dogs, and, climbing across the fence, went by back ways to Olénin's lodging. He did not like to meet women when he went out hunting. Olénin was still asleep, and Vanyúsha, who was awake, but not yet up, was considering whether it was time or not, when Eróshka, with gun on his back, and in complete hunter's trappings, opened the door.

"Switches!" he cried, in his bass voice. "To arms! The Chechéns have come! Iván! Get the samovár ready for your master! You, too, get up! Lively!" cried the old man. "That's the way with us, my good man! See, the girls are all up! Look through the window, look! She is going for water, and you are still asleep."

Olénin awoke, and leaped up. And how refreshed and merry he felt at the sight of the old man, and at the sound of his voice!

"Lively! Lively, Vanyúsha!" he shouted.

"That is the way you go out hunting! People are getting their breakfast, and you are asleep. Lyam! Come here!" he called to his dog.

"Is your gun ready?" he shouted, as though there were a whole crowd in the room.

"Well, I am guilty, but what is to be done? Powder, Vanyúsha! And the wads!" said Olénin.

"The fine!" cried the old man.

"*Du té voulez-vous?*" said Vanyúsha, grinning.

"You are not one of us! You are not talking in our language, you devil!" the old man cried to him, showing the roots of his teeth.

"A first offence is generally forgiven," joked Olénin, pulling on his big boots.

"The first offence is forgiven," answered Eróshka, "but if you sleep late the next time, your fine will be a bucket of red wine. When it gets warmer, you can't find the stags."

"But even if we find them, they are more intelligent than we," said Olénin, repeating the old man's words which he had said the evening before. "You cannot cheat them."

"Laugh all you please! First kill one, and then talk. Come, now, lively! Look there, your landlord is coming to see you," said Eróshka, looking out of the window. "Just see how he is dressed up! He has put on a new coat so as to let you know that he is an officer. Oh, what a people! What a people!"

And indeed, Vanyúsha announced to the master that the landlord wanted to see him.

"*L'argent*," he said, significantly, to prepare his master for the meaning of the ensign's visit. He was soon followed by the ensign himself, who entered the room swaggering, and with a smile on his face, and wished Olénin a pleasant Sunday. He wore a new mantle, with the shoulder-straps of an officer, and polished boots, which is a rarity among Cossacks.

The ensign, Ilyá Vasílevich, was an educated Cossack, who had been in Russia, and was a school teacher; but above all he was noble. He wanted to appear noble, but under the monstrous veneer of his glibness, self-confidence, and preposterous speech one could not help perceiving the same Uncle Eróshka. This was also evident from his sunburnt face, from his hands, and red nose. Olénin invited him to sit down.

"Good morning, Father Ilyá Vasílevich!" said Eróshka, arising, and, as Olénin thought, making an ironically low bow.

"Good morning, uncle! Are you already here?" replied the ensign, carelessly nodding his head to him.

The ensign was a man of about forty years of age, with a gray, wedge-shaped beard, lean, slender, and handsome, and still very well preserved for his forty years. When he came to see Olénin, he was obviously afraid lest he should be taken for a common Cossack, so he wanted to make him feel his importance right away.

"This is our Egyptian Nimrod," he said, turning with a self-satisfied smile to Olénin, and pointing to the old man. "A hunter before the Lord. He is a great hand at everything. Have you made his acquaintance already?"

Uncle Eróshka, looking at his feet, which were wrapped in wet buckskins, thoughtfully shook his head, as though wondering at the ensign's glibness and learning, and mumbled to himself, "Gyptian Nimbrod! What a name!"

"Yes, we want to go hunting," said Olénin.

"That is right," remarked the ensign, "but I have a little business with you."

"What is it you wish?"

"Whereas you be a nobleman," began the ensign, "and whereas I am able to understand myself as also having the rank of an officer, and we consequently may treat each other as of equal rank, just as with all noblemen" (he stopped, and with a smile glanced upon the old man and upon Olénin) — "But if you should have the desire, in accordance with my agreement, for my wife being a foolish woman, in our condition of life, she could not in the present time completely grasp your words of yesterday's date. And thus my lodgings might have gone to the adjutant of the regiment for six roubles, without the stable, and, as being a nobleman, I can always remove one for gratis. And whereas you should wish, I, being

myself of the rank an officer, can personally come to an agreement with you, and as an inhabitant of this country, not as is the habit, I am able to comply with all the points of the agreement — "

"He talks clearly," mumbled the old man.

The ensign talked long in the same strain. Of this, all Olénin was able to make out, not without great difficulty, was that the ensign wanted to get six roubles a month for his quarters. He gladly complied with his wish, and offered his guest a glass of tea. The ensign declined it.

"According to our foolish custom," he said, "we regard it almost a sin to use a general glass. Though, in accordance with my education, I might understand it; my wife, in her human weakness — "

"Well, will you have a glass of tea?"

"If you will permit me, I will bring my own glass, my special glass," answered the ensign, and walked out on the porch. "Fetch me a glass!" he shouted.

A few minutes later the door opened, and a young sunburnt hand, in a rose-coloured sleeve, holding a glass, was stretched out through the door. The ensign walked up, took the glass, and said something in a whisper to his daughter. Olénin filled the special glass for the ensign, and a general glass for Eróshka.

"However, I do not wish to keep you," said the ensign, burning his lips in his haste to finish his glass. "I, so to say, have myself a great passion for fishing, and I am here only on vacation, so to say, on a recreation from my duties. I also have a desire to try my luck, and to see whether the 'Gifts of Térek'[1] will not fall to my lot. I hope you will visit me sometime, to drink the 'family' cup, according to our village custom," he added.

The ensign bowed, pressed Olénin's hand, and went out. As Olénin was getting ready to go, he heard the ensign's commanding voice giving orders to the members of his

[1] Poem by Lérmontov.

family. A few minutes later Olénin saw the ensign in trousers rolled up over his knees and in a torn half-coat, with a net across his shoulder, walking past the window.

"The rascal!" said Uncle Eróshka, finishing his tea from the general glass. "Well, will you rèally pay him six roubles? Who has ever heard the like? You may have the best cabin in the village for two roubles. What a beast! Why, I will let you have mine for three roubles."

"No, I had better remain here," said Olénin.

"Six roubles! It is evidently fool's money you have! Pshaw," said the old man. "Fetch the red wine, Iván!"

Having taken a snack and drunk some brandy for the journey, Olénin and the old man went out into the street, at about eight o'clock.

At the gate they met a cart all hitched up. Maryánka, her head wrapped down to her eyes with a white kerchief, wearing a half-coat over her shirt, in boots, and holding a long switch in her hands, was pulling the oxen by a rope that was attached to their horns.

"Motherkin," said the old man, making a motion as though he wanted to hug her.

Maryánka raised her switch at him, and gave them both a merry glance with her beautiful eyes.

Olénin felt even more cheerful than before.

"Well, come! Come on!" he said, shouldering his gun, and feeling the girl's eyes resting upon him.

"Get up!" Maryánka's voice rang out behind them, and soon after the moving cart was heard to creak.

As long as the road led back of the houses of the village, over pastures, Eróshka kept talking. He could not forget the ensign, and he did not stop abusing him.

"But why are you so angry at him?" asked Olénin.

"He is stingy! I do not like him," answered the old man. "When he dies, everything will be left. For whom is he hoarding? He has put up two buildings. A second

garden he got by a lawsuit from his brother. And he is a great hand at writing documents! They come to him from other villages to get their documents written by him. And as he writes, so it happens. He always strikes it right. For whom is he hoarding? He has but one boy and one girl, and when she is married, there will be nobody left."

"Then he is laying up for the dowry," said Olénin.

"What dowry? They are anxious to get the girl, — she is a fine girl. He is such a devil that he wants to marry her to a rich man. He wants to skin him out of a big marriage gift. Luká is a Cossack; he is a neighbour of mine and my nephew; a fine chap who has killed a Chechén, and they have tried to get her for him, but he will not let him have her. He finds one excuse after another. 'The girl is too young,' he says. But I know what he is thinking about. He wants them to come with gifts. He is acting shamefully about that girl. But Lukáshka will get her in the end, for he is the first Cossack in the village, a brave; he killed an abrék, and they will give him a cross."

"What is that now? As I was walking in the yard last night, I saw my landlady's daughter kissing a Cossack," said Olénin.

"You are bragging," shouted the old man, stopping.

"Upon my word!" said Olénin.

"A woman is a devil," said Eróshka, pensively. "What kind of a Cossack was it?"

"I did not see."

"What was the colour of the hair on his cap? White?"

"Yes."

"And a red coat? About your size?"

"No, a little taller."

"That's he!" Eróshka roared. "That's he, my Márka. I call him Márka for fun. That's he. I love him! I

was just like him, my father. What is the use asking them? My mistress used to sleep with her mother and sister-in-law, but I climbed in all the same. She used to live up-stairs. Her mother was a witch, a devil: she hated me dreadfully. I used to come with my chum, they called him Girchík. I would walk up under the window, climb on his shoulders, raise the window, and grope my way in. She slept on a bench. Once I awakened her. She began to groan, for she did not recognize me. 'Who is there?' But I did not dare answer. Her mother was already stirring. I took off my cap, and gagged her with it: then she recognized me by the border of my cap. She leaped up from her bed. At other times, I did not need any of these stratagems. And she would bring me boiled cream, and grapes, and everything," added Eróshka, who explained everything in a practical manner. "And she was not the only one. It was a fine life I led."

"And now?"

"Let us follow the dog! When a pheasant alights on a tree, shoot!"

"Would you court Maryánka?"

"You watch the dogs! I will tell you about it in the evening," said the old man, pointing to his favourite dog, Lyam.

They grew silent. Having walked about one hundred steps, talking now and then, the old man stopped once more and pointed to a stick that was lying across the path.

"What do you think about it?" he said. "Do you think it is lying right? No, the stick is lying badly."

"What is there bad in it?"

He smiled.

"You do not know anything. Listen to me! When a stick lies like that, you must not step over it, but walk around it, or throw the stick away, and say the prayer, 'To the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost,' and

then you may go with God's aid. It will not hurt you then. Old people used to tell me that."

"What nonsense!" said Olénin. "Tell me rather about Maryánka. Well, so she keeps company with Lukáshka?"

"Sh! Now keep quiet," the old man again interrupted the conversation, in a whisper. "Just listen. We will go around through the forest."

And the old man, stepping inaudibly in his buckskins, walked ahead on a narrow path which entered a dense, wild, overgrown forest. He looked now and then, frowningly, back upon Olénin, who produced a rustling noise and a thud with his big boots, and, carrying his gun carelessly, several times caught in the branches of the trees that hung over the path.

"Don't make any noise! Go more softly, soldier!" he said to him, angrily, in a whisper.

The air felt as though the sun were up. The mist was beginning to disperse, but it still enveloped the tops of the trees. The forest seemed to be terribly high. The view changed at every step forward. What seemed to be a tree, turned out to be a bush; the reeds looked like trees.

XIX.

THE mist had lifted, so that the moist reed thatches could be seen, and now was changed into dew that dampened the road and the grass near the fences. The smoke rose in clouds from the chimneys. The people were leaving the village, some to go to their work, others to the river, and others again to the cordon. The hunters walked together over the damp, grass-grown path. The dogs ran, wagging their tails and looking at their master, on both sides of them. Millions of gnats hovered in the air, and pursued the hunters, covering their backs, eyes, and hands. The air was fragrant with grass and the dampness of the woods. Olénin continually looked back at the ox-cart, in which Maryánka sat, urging on the oxen with a stick.

Everything was quiet. The sounds of the village, audible before, no longer reached the hunters; only the dogs crashed through the thorn bushes, and now and then a bird uttered a sound. Olénin knew that the woods were dangerous, that abréks were always concealed in such places. He also knew that for a man on foot a gun was a great protection in the forest. Not that he was afraid, but he felt that any other person would feel afraid; and, looking with strained attention into the misty, damp forest, and listening to the occasional faint sounds, he fingered his gun and experienced a novel and pleasant sensation.

Uncle Eróshka walked ahead and stopped at every

puddle, where there were double tracks of animals; he examined them carefully and showed them to Olénin. He said very little; occasionally he made some remark in a whisper. The road over which they were walking was rutted by cart-wheels, and thickly overgrown with grass. The cork-elm and plane-tree forest on both sides of the road was so dense and so choked with underbrush that it was impossible to look through it. Nearly every tree was thickly overgrown to its top with wild grape-vines; and below, grew thick blackthorn bushes. Every small clearing was overrun with blackberry vines and reeds with their gray, wavy tops. Here and there large animal tracks and small tunnelled trails of pheasants led from the road into the thicket. The rankness of the vegetation in this forest, which had not been tracked by cattle, greatly impressed Olénin at every step he took, for he had never seen anything like it. This forest, the peril, the old man with his mysterious whisper, Maryánka with her strong, stately figure, and the mountains,—all this appeared to Olénin like a dream.

"The dog has treed a pheasant," whispered the old man, looking around, and pulling his cap over his face. "Hide your mug, it is a pheasant!" He angrily waved his hand to Olénin and crept on, almost on his hands and knees. "It does not like a man's mug."

Olénin was some distance behind him, when the old man stopped and began to examine the tree. A cock called from the tree to the dog, which was barking at him, and Olénin noticed the pheasant. But just then a report, like a cannon, rang out from Eróshka's monstrous gun, and the cock flew up, dropping some of his feathers, and fell to the ground. Walking up to the old man, Olénin scared up another. Putting his gun to his shoulder, he aimed and fired. The pheasant circled upwards and then, catching in the branches, fell like a stone into the thicket.

"You are a brick!" cried the old man, who could not shoot a bird on the wing, and smiled.

They picked up the pheasants and went on. Excited by the motion and by the praise, Olénin kept up a conversation with the old man.

"Wait! We will go in this direction," the old man interrupted him. "I saw a deer trail here yesterday."

Having turned into the thicket and gone some three hundred paces, they came to a clearing that was overgrown with reeds, and in places overflowed with water. Olénin kept falling behind the old huntsman, and suddenly Uncle Eróshka crouched, about twenty steps in front of him, excitedly nodding his head and waving his hand. When Olénin came up to him, he saw the track of a man's feet, to which the old man was pointing.

"You see?"

"I do. What of it?" said Olénin, trying to speak as calmly as possible. "It is a man's track."

Involuntarily the thought of Cooper's "Pathfinder" and of abréks flashed through his head, and when he saw the mysterious manner in which the old man walked ahead, he could not make up his mind to ask him any questions, and was in doubt whether it was the peril or the hunt which caused this mystery.

"No, that is my track," the old man answered, simply, and pointed to the grass, underneath which a faint animal track was visible.

The old man went ahead. Olénin did not fall back. Having walked about twenty paces, they went down-hill and came to a spreading pear-tree in a thicket; underneath it the earth was black, and fresh animal dung lay upon it.

The place was all covered with grape-vines, and resembled a covered cosy arbour, dark and cool.

"He has been here this morning," said the old man, sighing. "The lair is still fresh and steaming."

Suddenly a mighty crash was heard in the forest, about ten paces from them. Both of them were startled and grasped their guns, but they could not see anything; they could only hear the breaking of branches. The swift, even thud of a gallop could be heard for a moment; then the crackling passed into a hollow din, farther and farther away, and reëchoing farther and farther through the quiet forest. Olénin felt as though something was breaking in his heart. He gazed in vain into the green thicket, and finally looked at the old man. Uncle Eróshka stood immovable, pressing his gun to his chest; his cap was poised on the back of his head; his eyes were burning with an uncommon brilliancy; and his mouth, showing its well-worn yellow teeth, remained open, as though petrified.

"A horned stag!" he said. He threw his gun down in despair, and began to pull his gray beard. "Here he stood! I ought to have walked up from the path! Fool! Fool!" and he tugged his beard in anger. "Fool! Hog!" he repeated, painfully pulling his beard.

It looked as though something were flying by, above the forest, in the mist. Farther and farther away resounded the gallop of the stag.

Olénin and the old man returned at twilight. He was weary, hungry, and full of strength. The dinner was ready. He ate and drank with the old man, and feeling warm and gay, he walked out on the porch. Again the mountains in the west rose before his eyes. Again the old man told his endless stories about hunting, about abréks, and about mistresses, — about a careless, adventurous life. Again fair Maryánka walked in and out, and crossed the yard. Under her shirt was clearly outlined the powerful, virgin body of the fair maiden.

XX.

On the following day Olénin went without the old man to the place where they had scared up the stag. Instead of going through the gate, he climbed over a hedge of brambles, just as everybody else in the village would do. He had not yet got all the thorns out of his mantle, when his dog, which had run ahead, startled two pheasants. The moment he entered into the buckthorn thicket, pheasants flew up at every step. (The old man had not shown him this place the day before, intending to hunt there with snares.) Olénin killed five pheasants out of twelve shots, and, crawling for them under the thorn bushes, grew so fatigued that the perspiration trickled down his face in streams. He called back his dog, uncocked his gun, put the bullets on the shot, and, warding off the gnats with the sleeves of his mantle, slowly walked toward the place where he had been the day before. It was, however, impossible to keep back the dog, which ran upon trails on the path, and he killed two more pheasants; he lost his time with them, and did not come to the familiar spot before midday.

It was a very clear, quiet, warm day. The morning dampness was dried up even in the forest, and millions of gnats literally covered his face, back, and hands. The black dog looked gray under a covering of gnats. The mantle, through which the gnats thrust their stings, looked just as gray. Olénin wanted to run away from the pests; he even thought that it would be impossible to pass a summer in the village. He started homewards; but con-

sidering that people lived there in spite of the gnats, he determined to suffer, and patiently endured the stings. Strange to say, toward midday the sensation began to be agreeable to him. It even seemed to him that if it were not for that atmosphere of the gnats which surrounded him, and for that paste of gnats, which under his hand was smeared over his whole perspiring face, and for that disquieting burning over his whole body, the forest of that region would lose its character and charm for him. These myriads of insects were so appropriate to this wild, desperately rich vegetation, to this endless mass of beasts and birds that filled the woods, to this green foliage, to this redolent, warm air, to these runlets of muddy water which oozed on all sides from the Térek, and which bubbled somewhere under the overhanging branches, that that which before had appeared to him terrible and unbearable, now gave him pleasure.

Having passed by the spot where on the previous day they had seen the stag, and not meeting anything there, he wanted to take a rest. The sun stood straight over the forest, and its direct rays burnt his back and head every time he walked out on a clearing or into the road. Seven heavy pheasants weighed heavily on the small of his back. He found the stag's tracks of the previous day, crawled under the bush in the thicket where the stag had been lying the day before, and lay down near the lair. He examined the dark foliage all around him, the damp place, the dung of the previous day, the imprint of the stag's knees, a clump of black earth which the stag had kicked up, and his own tracks of the day before. He felt cool and comfortable; he thought of nothing, wished for nothing.

And suddenly he was overcome by such a strange feeling of causeless happiness and love for everything that, following an old boyish habit, he began to cross himself and to thank somebody for something. It suddenly

passed through his mind with extraordinary clearness that he, Dmítri Olénin, a being apart from all other beings, was sitting all alone, God knew where, in the very spot where there used to live a stag, a beautiful old stag which, perhaps, had never before seen a man, and in a place where, perhaps, no one had been sitting before, or thinking about the same matter.

"I am sitting here, and all about me are young and old trees, and one of these is festooned with wild grape-vines; near me pheasants are fluttering, driving each other from their hiding-places, and probably scenting their dead brothers." He put his fingers on his pheasants, examined them, and wiped his hand, which was stained by their warm blood, against his mantle. "The jackals are probably scenting them, and with dissatisfied faces turning away in the opposite direction. The gnats fly all around me, passing by leaves that appear to them like so many huge islands, and they hover in the air and buzz: one, two, three, four, one hundred, one thousand, a million gnats, and all of them buzz something, for some reason, all about me, and every one of them is just such a Dmítri Olénin, apart from all the rest, as I am." He had a clear idea of what the gnats were thinking and buzzing. "Here, boys! Here is one whom we can eat," they buzzed, and clung to him. And it became clear to him that he was not at all a Russian nobleman, a member of Moscow society, a friend and relative of this or that person, but simply just such a gnat, or pheasant, or stag, as those that now were living all around him. "I shall live and die, just like them, like Uncle Eróshka. And he is telling the truth, 'Only grass will grow up!'

"And what of it if the grass will grow up?" he continued his thought. "Still I must live; I must be happy, because I wish but for this — happiness. It matters not what I am: such an animal as the rest, over which the grass will grow, and nothing else, or a frame into which

a part of the One God has been encased, — I must still live the best way possible. But how must I live in order to be happy, and why have I not been happy before?" And he began to recall his former life, and he was disgusted with himself. He represented himself as an exacting egoist, whereas in reality he needed very little for himself. And he kept gazing about him: at the foliage checkered by the sunlight, at the declining sun, and at the clear heaven, and he felt himself as happy as before.

"Why am I happy, and why have I lived before?" he thought. "How exacting I used to be! How I concocted and caused nothing but shame and woe for myself!" And suddenly it seemed that a new world was open to him. "Happiness is this," he said to himself: "happiness consists in living for others. This is clear. The desire for happiness is inborn in man; consequently it is legitimate. In attempting to satisfy it in an egoistical manner, that is, by seeking wealth, glory, comforts of life, and love, the circumstances may so arrange themselves that it is impossible to satisfy these desires. Consequently these desires are illegitimate, but the need of happiness is not illegitimate. Now, what desires are these that can always be satisfied, in spite of external conditions? What desires? Love, self-sacrifice!"

He was so rejoiced and excited when he discovered this truth which seemed to be new, that he leaped up and impatiently began to look around for some one to sacrifice himself for, to do good to, and to love. "I do not need anything for myself," he proceeded in his thought, "then why should I not live for others?"

He picked up his gun and walked out of the thicket, with the intention of returning as soon as possible to the house, where he could consider the matter carefully, and would find a chance to do some good. When he walked out into the clearing, he gazed about him: the sun could no longer be seen above the tree-tops; it was growing

cooler, and the locality seemed to him quite unfamiliar and not like the one which surrounded the village. Everything was suddenly changed, — both the weather, and the character of the forest. The sky was shrouded by clouds; the wind rustled in the tree-tops; all around him could be seen nothing but reeds and old, broken trees. He called his dog, which had run ahead of him in pursuit of some animal, and his voice reëchoed in the wilderness.

And suddenly he felt dreadfully ill at ease. He grew timid. Abréks and murders, of which he had heard, passed through his mind, and he waited for a Chechén to jump out from behind each bush, when he would have to defend his life and die, or like a coward run. He thought of God and of the future life, as he never before had thought of it. And all around him was the same gloomy, severe, wild Nature. "Is it worth while to live for myself," he thought, "when I may die any minute, and die without having done any good, and without any one knowing it?"

He walked in the direction where he supposed the village to be. He no longer thought of his hunt. He experienced mortal fatigue, and with extraordinary attention, almost with terror, watched every bush and tree, expecting any moment to make his account with life. Having wandered about for quite awhile, he came to a runlet, down which flowed the sandy, cold water of the Térek, and, not to lose his way again, he decided to walk along the brook. He walked, without knowing whither it would take him. Suddenly the reeds behind him rustled. He was startled and grasped his gun. He was ashamed of himself when he saw his panting dog rush into the cold water of the runlet and lap it.

He took a drink himself and walked in the direction of the stream, hoping that it would bring him to the village; but, in spite of the companionship of his dog, everything around him appeared to him unusually gloomy.

The forest was growing darker, the wind blew ever stronger through the tops of the old broken trees. Some large birds were shrieking and circling about the nests in these trees. The vegetation grew more scanty; rustling reeds and barren, sandy clearings, tramped down by animal tracks, became more common. To the roar of the wind was added another disagreeable, monotonous roar. He felt altogether melancholy. He put his hand on the pheasants back of him, and he found one missing. The pheasant had broken off and was lost, and only the bloody neck and head remained in the belt. He had never felt so terribly before. He began to pray to God, and he was afraid but of this, that he might die without having done anything good; and he was so anxious to live, to live, in order to commit an act of self-renunciation.

XXI.

SUDDENLY his soul became illumined as though by the sun. He heard the sounds of Russian speech, and the swift and even flow of the Térek, and two steps in front of him lay the cinnamon-coloured moving surface of the river, with its dark brown wet sand on the banks and shoals, the distant steppe, the watch-tower of the cordon that stood out above the water, a saddled horse walking hobbled in the buckthorn-bushes, and the mountains. The red sun burst suddenly from behind a cloud, and with its last rays gleamed merrily down the river, over the reeds, on the watch-tower, and on the Cossacks gathered in a group, among whom Lukáshka involuntarily attracted Olénin's attention by his spirited figure.

Olénin again felt, without any apparent cause, quite happy. He had struck the Nízhne-Protók post, on the Térek, opposite the peaceable native village on the other side of the river. He saluted the Cossacks, but finding no chance of doing a good act, walked into the hut. Nor did any chance present itself there. He walked into the clay hut and lighted a cigarette. The Cossacks paid little attention to Olénin, in the first place, because he smoked a cigarette; in the second, because on that evening they had another attraction.

Some hostile Chechéns, relatives of the dead abrék, had come down from the mountains with a spy, to ransom the body. They were waiting for the Cossack authorities to come from the village. The brother of the killed man, a tall, stately fellow, with a clipped beard painted red,

though wearing a mantle and cap that were all tattered and torn, was as self-possessed and majestic as a king. His face resembled that of the dead abrék very closely. He did not bestow a glance upon any one, not once gazed at the dead man, and, squatting in the shade on his heels, smoked his pipe and spit, and occasionally uttered a few guttural sounds of command, to which his companion listened respectfully. It was obvious that he was a brave who had more than once seen the Russians, and under different conditions, and that at the present time nothing among the Russians either surprised or interested him.

Olénin went up to the dead man and began to gaze at him, but the brother, casting a calm, contemptuous, supercilious glance upon Olénin, said something abruptly and angrily. The spy hastened to cover the abrék's face with the dead man's mantle. Olénin was impressed by the majesty and austerity of the brave's face. He said something to him, asking him from what village he was, but the Chechén barely looked at him, spit out contemptuously, and turned away his face. Olénin was so much surprised that the mountaineer was not interested in him, that he explained to himself his indifference as arising from mere stupidity, or from an unfamiliarity with the language. He turned to his companion. His companion, the spy and interpreter, was just as ragged, but his hair was black and not red, and he was very agile, and had extremely white teeth and sparkling black eyes. The spy gladly entered into a conversation, and asked for a cigarette.

"There are five brothers," the spy said, in his broken, half-Russian speech. "The Russians have just killed the third brother, and only two are left: he is a brave, a great brave," said the spy, pointing to the Chechén. "When they killed Akhmét-khan" (that was the name of the dead abrék) "he was sitting in the reeds on the other side of the river; he saw everything, — how they

put him in a skiff, and how they took him to the shore. He stayed there until night; he wanted to kill the old man, but the others would not let him."

Lukáshka walked up to the speakers and sat down.

"From what village are they?" he asked.

"There, in those mountains," answered the spy, pointing beyond the Térek to a bluish mist-covered cleft. "Do you know Suyúk-su? About ten versts beyond it."

"Do you know Giréy-khan in Suyúk-su?" asked Lukáshka, obviously boasting of his friendship. "He is my chum."

"My neighbour," answered the spy.

"A fine fellow!" and Lukáshka, apparently much interested, began to speak in Tartar with the interpreter.

The captain and village elder, with a suite of two Cossacks, all mounted, arrived soon after. The captain, a newly created Cossack officer, saluted the Cossacks; no one answered the salutation with a "We wish you health, well-born sir!" as army soldiers do, but here and there a Cossack answered by a mere nod. Some, and Lukáshka was among their number, rose and stood in a military attitude. The under-officer reported everything in proper condition at the post. All this seemed very ridiculous to Olénin; it looked as though the Cossacks tried to play soldiers. But the formality soon passed into simple relations, and the captain, who was just such an agile Cossack as the rest, carried on a brisk conversation in Tartar with the interpreter. They wrote up a document which they gave to the spy; they took money from him, and went up to the dead body.

"Gavrílov Luká, who is he?" said the captain.

Lukáshka took off his cap and stepped up to him.

"I have sent a report about you to the commander. I do not know what will come of it. I have recommended a cross, — it is too early yet for a sergeancy. Can you read and write?"

"Not at all."

"What a fine-looking fellow you are," said the captain, continuing to play the superior. "Put on your cap! Of what Gavrílovs is he? Of the Broad?"

"His nephew," answered the under-officer.

"I know, I know. Now, come on, give them a lift," he said to the Cossacks.

Lukáshka's face was gleaming with joy, and looked more beautiful than ever. Walking away from the under-officer, and donning his cap, he again seated himself near Olénin.

When the body was carried into the skiff, the brother of the Chechén brave walked down to the shore. The Cossacks involuntarily stepped aside, to make way for him. He pushed off the boat with his powerful foot, and leaped into it. Olénin noticed that he now, for the first time, cast a rapid glance upon all the Cossacks, and again abruptly asked his companion something. His companion answered him and pointed to Lukáshka. The Chechén gazed at him, and, turning slowly away, began to look at the other shore. Not hatred, but cold contempt, was expressed in this glance. He again said something.

"What did he say?" asked Olénin, of the mercurial interpreter.

"You strike ours, we kill yours, — all the same," said the spy, obviously lying. He laughed, displaying his white teeth, and jumped into the skiff.

The brother of the dead man sat immovable, and looked steadily at the other bank. He was so full of hatred and contempt that there could be nothing interesting for him on this side. The spy stood at the end of the skiff, and, transferring his oar from one side to the other, skilfully directed the boat. He was talking without cessation. The skiff cut the current in an oblique direction, and looked ever smaller and smaller. Their voices were scarcely audible, and finally they could be

seen disembarking where their horses were standing. There they carried the body on shore. Though the horse was restless, they placed the body on its saddle, mounted, and slowly rode along the road past the village, from which a crowd of people came out to look at them. The Cossacks on our side were very contented and happy. Everywhere were heard laughter and jokes. The captain and village elder made themselves comfortable in the clay hut. Lukáshka, with happy face, to which he vainly tried to give a staid appearance, sat near Olénin, leaning his elbows on his knees and whittling a stick.

"Why do you smoke?" he said, as though with curiosity. "Is it good?"

He said this for no other reason than because he noticed that Olénin did not feel at ease, and was all alone among the Cossacks.

"I am just used to it," answered Olénin. "Why?"

"Hm! It would be bad if any of us fellows should smoke! It is not far to the mountains," said Lukáshka, pointing to the cleft, "and yet you won't get there so easily! How will you get home by yourself? It is dark. I will take you home if you wish," said Lukáshka. "Just ask the under-officer's permission."

"What a fine fellow!" thought Olénin, watching the Cossack's happy face. He recalled Maryánka and the kiss which he had heard by the gate, and he was sorry for Lukáshka, sorry for his lack of education.

"What bosh and nonsense!" he thought. "One man has killed another, and he is happy as though he had committed a most beautiful act. Does nothing tell him that there is no cause here for any great rejoicing? That happiness does not consist in killing, but in sacrificing yourself?"

"Now, don't you get in his way, brother!" said one of the Cossacks who had accompanied the skiff, turning to Lukáshka. "Did you hear him ask about you?"

Lukáshka raised his head.

"You mean the godson?" said Lukáshka, meaning the Chechén.

"The godson will not rise again, but his red-haired brother may be godfather."

"Let him thank God for having escaped with a whole skin!" said Lukáshka, laughing.

"What are you rejoicing at?" Olénin said to Lukáshka. "Would you rejoice if they killed your brother?"

The Cossack's eyes were smiling, as they looked at Olénin. He evidently understood what the other wanted to say, but he was above such considerations.

"Well? It does happen! Do they not kill our brothers?"

XXII.

THE captain and elder rode away. Wishing to give Lukáshka some pleasure and not to walk all alone through the woods, Olénin asked the under-officer to give Lukáshka a leave of absence, which was granted. Olénin thought that Lukáshka wanted to see Maryánka, and he was in general glad to have the companionship of such an apparently agreeable and talkative Cossack. Lukáshka and Maryánka involuntarily were united in his imagination, and it gave him pleasure to think of them. "He loves Maryanka," Olénin thought, "and I might have loved her." And a strong, novel feeling of humility of spirit took possession of him on his way through the dark forest. Lukáshka, too, was light of heart. There was something resembling love between these two so different young people. Every time they looked at each other, they felt like laughing.

"What gate do you go to?" asked Olénin.

"Into the middle gate. But I will take you to the swamp. There you need not fear anything."

Olénin laughed.

"Do you think I am afraid? Go back, I thank you. I will get there myself."

"Never mind! What else have I to do? How can you help being afraid? We are," said Lukáshka, also laughing, and assuaging his vanity.

"Come to my house! We will talk and drink together, and in the morning you can leave."

"Oh, I will find a place where I can pass a night,"

Lukáshka laughed, "and the under-officer told me to be back."

"I heard you singing songs last night, and I saw you, too."

"All people — " and Luká shook his head.

"Well, are you going to marry? Is it true?" Olénin asked.

"Mother wants to get me married. But I have not yet a horse."

"You are not yet a mounted Cossack?"

"No, I am just getting ready to be one. I have no horse, and I don't know how to procure one. So they cannot get me married yet."

"How much does a horse cost?"

"We were chaffering for one the other day across the river. They would not take sixty roubles for him, — and it is a Nogáy horse."

"Will you be my life-guardsman?" (A life-guardsman was a kind of an orderly to an officer during an expedition.) "I will get that appointment for you, and will give you a horse," Olénin suddenly exclaimed. "Truly; I have two, and I do not need both."

"Why do you not need them?" Lukáshka said, laughing. "Why give it away? I will pay you for it, God permitting."

"Truly! Or will you not be my life-guardsman?" said Olénin, rejoicing at the thought of giving Lukáshka a horse. But, for some reason or other, he felt awkward and ashamed. He was trying to say something, but did not know what.

Lukáshka was the first to break the silence.

"Have you a house of your own in Russia?" he asked.

Olénin could not keep from telling him that he had not only one, but several houses.

"Are they fine houses? Larger than ours?" Lukáshka asked, good-naturedly.

"Much larger, ten times larger; three stories high," Olénin told him.

"And have you such horses as we have?"

"I have a hundred head of horses, worth three hundred and four hundred roubles apiece, — only they are not your kind of horses. Three hundred in silver! They are race-horses, you know — But I love yours better."

"Did you come here of your own will, or not?" asked Lukáshka, as though in ridicule. "You are off your path," he added, pointing to the road near which they were passing. "Keep to the right!"

"Just of my own free will," answered Olénin. "I wanted to see your country, and take part in expeditions."

"I should like myself to go out with an expedition," said Lukáshka. "Do you hear how the jackals are howling?" he added, listening attentively.

"Tell me, do you not feel terribly at having killed a man?" Olénin asked.

"What am I to be afraid of? I would gladly take part in an expedition!" Lukáshka repeated. "I am so anxious, so anxious — "

"Maybe we will go together. Our company and yours, too, will move before the holidays."

"What pleasure do you see in coming here? You have a house, and horses, and slaves. I would be celebrating all the time. Have you any rank?"

"I am a yunker, and recommended for advancement."

"Well, if you are not bragging about the things you possess, I would not have left my home. I would not leave it anyway. Do you like our life?"

"Yes; very much," said Olénin.

It was quite dark when they, conversing in this manner, reached the village. The darkness of the forest still surrounded them. The wind howled high in the tree-tops. The jackals, it seemed, suddenly moaned, laughed, and cried near them; but in front of them, in the village,

were heard the talk of women and barking of dogs; and the outlines of cabins were clearly defined, and lights gleamed, and the air was redolent with the odour, the particular odour, of dung-chip smoke. Olénin felt, more especially on that evening, that here was his house, his family, all his happiness, and that nowhere had he lived, or ever should live, as happily as in this village. That evening he loved everybody, but particularly Lukáshka! When they arrived home, Olénin, to Lukáshka's great astonishment, brought out of the stable a horse which he had bought at Gróznaya, — not the one on which he always rode, but another, — not a bad-looking, though not a very young horse, and gave it to him.

"Why should you make a gift to me?" said Lukáshka. "I have done you no service."

"Truly, it does not cost me anything," replied Olénin. "Take it, and you will make me some gift — We will go into the expedition together."

Lukáshka was embarrassed.

"How is that? A horse costs something," he said, without looking at the horse.

"Take it, do take it! You will offend me if you do not take it! Vanyúsha, take the gray out to him!"

Lukáshka took hold of the bridle.

"I thank you. Well, that was unexpected."

Olénin was as happy as a twelve-year-old boy.

"Tie him up here! It is a good horse, I bought him in Gróznaya, and he is a fine trotter. Vanyúsha, let us have some red wine! Come into the house!"

The wine was brought. Lukáshka sat down and took the wine-bowl.

"God will give me a chance to do you a good turn," he said, drinking the wine. "What is your name?"

"Dmítri Andréevich."

"Well, Mítri Andréevich, God preserve you. We will be chums. Now, you must come to see us sometime. We

are not rich people, but will know how to treat a guest. I will tell mother to let you have boiled cream or grapes, or whatever else you may need. And whenever you come to the cordon, I will be your servant, — whether on the hunt, or across the river, or wherever you may wish. A pity I did not know you the other day. I killed a fine boar! I divided him up among the Cossacks, or I would have brought him to you."

"All right, I thank you. Only do not hitch him to a team, for he has never been hitched before."

"Who would hitch a horse? I will tell you something," Lukáshka said, lowering his head. "I have a chum, Girév-khan by name. He called me to lie in ambush on the road where people from the mountains pass by; so we will go together. I will not give you away, I will be your trusty friend."

"We will go there sometime."

Lukáshka seemed to be quite at ease, and to understand Olénin's relations with him. His calm and simplicity of address surprised Olénin and even annoyed him a little. They talked together for quite awhile, and it was late when Lukáshka, not drunk (he never was), but well filled with wine, pressed Olénin's hand and left his room.

Olénin looked out of the window to see what he would do after leaving him. Lukáshka walked slowly, with drooping head. Then, when he had taken the horse outside the gate, he suddenly shook his head, jumped upon him like a cat, threw the reins of the halter over his head, and, shouting, galloped down the street. Olénin had imagined that he would go to share his joy with Maryánka; but even though Lukáshka had not done so, Olénin felt as happy as never before in his life. He was as joyful as a child, and could not keep from telling Vanyúsha, not only about his having given the horse to Lukáshka, but why he had made him that gift, and also

about his new theory of happiness. Vanyúsha did not approve of this theory, and he explained that *L'argent il n'y a pas,* and consequently it was all nonsense.

Lukáshka rode home, leaped from his horse, and gave it to his mother, with the injunction to let it out to pasture with the Cossack herd; but he himself had to return that very night to the cordon. The dumb girl promised to take down the horse, and she explained by signs that she would make her low obeisance to the man who had given him the horse, as soon as she should see him. The old woman only shook her head at her son's recital, and in her heart decided that Lukáshka had stolen the horse, and so she ordered the dumb girl to take him to pasture before daybreak.

Lukáshka went alone to the cordon, all the time revolving in his mind Olénin's act. Though the horse, in his opinion, was not a good one, yet it was worth at least forty roubles, and Lukáshka was very happy with the gift. But he could not understand why this gift was made, and so he did not feel the least gratitude. On the contrary, indistinct suspicions of the yunker's evil intentions disquieted his mind. What these intentions were, he could not make out, but it seemed impossible to him to admit the thought that a stranger would give him a horse worth forty roubles for no reason whatsoever, and just out of kindness. It would be a different matter if he had been intoxicated, and wanted to show off. But the yunker had been sober, consequently he wanted to bribe him for some bad deed.

"That's where you are mistaken!" thought Lukáshka. "I have the horse, and as for the rest, we will see. I am not as stupid as all that. We will see who will cheat whom!" he thought, feeling the need of being on guard against Olénin, and therefore of arousing in himself a hostile feeling toward him. He did not tell anybody how he had come by his horse. He told some he had bought

him, and gave evasive answers to others. Still the people of the village soon learned the truth. Lukáshka's mother, Maryánka, Ilyá Vasílevich, and other Cossacks, who were informed of Olénin's causeless gift, were perplexed, and began to fear the yunker. In spite of these fears, the deed aroused their great respect for Olénin's simplicity and wealth.

"Listen, the yunker who is lodged at Ilyá Vasílevich's gave Lukáshka a horse worth fifty roubles," said one. "He is rich!"

"I have heard so," answered another, thoughtfully. "He must have done him some service. We shall see, we shall see what he will do! That's the 'Saver's' luck!"

"These yunkers are an awful lot of cheats," said a third. "He'll burn down a house, or do something worse yet."

XXIII.

OLÉNIN'S life ran monotonously and smoothly. He had little to do with the authorities or his companions. The position of a rich yunker in the Caucasus is in this respect exceedingly advantageous. He was not sent out to work or to military drill. For his services in an expedition he was recommended for advancement as a regular officer, but in the meantime he was left alone. The officers regarded him as an aristocrat, and therefore were on their dignity in their relations with him. Card-playing and the carousals of the officers, accompanied by singing, which were common in the army, did not appear attractive to him, and he kept aloof from the society of the officers and from their life in the village.

The life of the officers in the Cossack villages has for a long time had a definite character. Just as every yunker or officer in the fortress regularly drinks porter, gambles at cards, and talks of rewards for services in expeditions, so he in the villages regularly drinks red wine with the landlord, treats the girls to cakes and honey, flirts with the Cossack girls, with whom he falls in love; and sometimes he gets married. Olénin always lived in his own peculiar manner, and had an unconscious aversion for beaten paths. Nor did he follow here the beaten track of the life of an officer in the Caucasus.

Without making any exertion, he woke with the daylight. After drinking his tea and admiring from his porch the mountains, the morning, and Maryánka, he put

on a torn ox-hide coat, the soaked buckskins, girded on his dagger, took his gun, a pouch with a lunch and tobacco, called his dog, and after five o'clock in the morning walked into the forest back of the village. At about seven o'clock in the evening he returned, tired, famished, with five or six pheasants in his belt, sometimes with a larger animal, while the pouch with the lunch and cigarettes remained untouched. If the thoughts in his head had remained like the cigarettes in his pouch, it would be easy to see that not one thought had stirred there in the course of these fourteen hours. He returned home morally fresh, strong, and completely happy. It would have been difficult for him to say what he had been thinking about during all that time. Not thoughts, not recollections, not dreams, were rummaging through his brain, — there were only fragments of all these. He sometimes stopped to ask himself what it was he was thinking about, and he discovered himself as a Cossack working with his wife in the gardens, or as an abrék in the mountains, or as a boar running away from himself. And all this time he listened, watched, and waited for a pheasant, boar, or stag.

In the evening Uncle Eróshka was sure to be at his house. Vanyúsha brought an eighth measure of wine, and they conversed softly and drank, and separated for the night well contented. On the following day there was again hunting, again healthful fatigue, again the wine-drinking and chatting, and again the contentment. Sometimes, on a holiday or day of rest, he passed a whole day at home. Then his chief interest was Maryánka, every motion of whom he eagerly watched, without being conscious of it, from his window or from his porch. He gazed at Maryánka, and loved her (so he thought) as he loved the beauty of the mountains and of the sky, and did not think of entering into any relations with her. It seemed to him that between him and her could not exist

the relations that were possible between her and Cossack Lukáshka, and still less the relations that were possible between a wealthy officer and a Cossack maiden. It appeared to him that if he tried to do what his companions were doing, he would exchange his full enjoyment and contemplation for an abyss of torments, disappointments, and regrets. Besides, in relation to this woman he had already accomplished the feat of self-renunciation, which had afforded him so much pleasure; but, above all, he was for some reason afraid of Maryánka, and would not dare to utter one word of pleasantry to her.

One summer day Olénin did not go out hunting, and remained at home. Quite unexpectedly a Moscow acquaintance of his, a very young man whom he used to meet in society, entered his room.

"Ah, *mon cher*, my dear, how happy I was to learn that you were here!" he began, in his Moscow French jargon, and he continued to interlard his speech with French words. "I heard them say 'Olénin.'. What Olénin? I was so rejoiced — So fate has brought us together. Well, how are you? What are you doing? And why here?"

Prince Byelétski told him his whole story: how he had joined the regiment for awhile, how the commander-in-chief had asked him to be his adjutant, and how he would enter his service after the expedition, although he was not in the least interested in the matter.

"If I serve here, in this wilderness, I must at least make a career — a cross — rank — and be transferred to the Guards. All this is necessary, not for my own sake, but for my relatives, for my friends. The prince has received me very well; he is a very nice kind of man," said Byelétski, without taking breath. "I have been recommended for an Anna decoration for services in the expedition. Now I am going to stay here to the

next campaign. It is superb here. What women! Well, and how do you pass your time? Our captain — you know Strátsev, a kind-hearted, stupid creature — told me that you lived here like a terrible savage, that you had nothing to do with anybody. I understand that you do not wish to become closely acquainted with the officers. I am glad we shall be able to see something of each other. I am lodging with the under-officer. What a girl his Ústenka is! I tell you she is fine!"

And more and more French and Russian words from that society which Olénin thought he had for ever abandoned were poured forth by him. The common opinion was that Byelétski was a dear, good-natured fellow. Maybe he really was; but to Olénin he appeared, in spite of his good-natured, handsome face, exceedingly disagreeable; he brought with him a strong breath of all that loathsomeness which he had renounced. But he was most annoyed because he could not, positively did not, have the strength to push away from himself that man from that society, as though that old past society had some inalienable rights upon him. He was angry at Byelétski and at himself, and against his will mingled French phrases with his conversation, took interest in the commander-in-chief and his Moscow acquaintances, and, on the basis of their speaking a French jargon in a Cossack village, referred with contempt to his fellow officers, and to the Cossacks, and treated Byelétski in a friendly manner, promising to call on him, and asking him to come to see him. However, Olénin never called on Byelétski. Vanyúsha approved of Byelétski, saying that he was a real gentleman.

Byelétski at once took up the customary life of a rich Caucasus officer in the village. Olénin could see his rapid evolution: in one month he appeared to be an old inhabitant of the village; he treated the old men, gave evening parties, and himself went to girls' evening parties, boasted

of his conquests, and even went so far that the girls and women for some reason called him *little grandfather*, while the Cossacks, who had formed a clear idea about the man who was fond of wine and women, became accustomed to him, and even liked him better than Olénin, who remained a puzzle to them.

XXIV.

It was five o'clock in the morning. Vanyúsha was on the porch, fanning the samovár with his bootleg. Olénin had already ridden down to the Térek to bathe. (He had lately discovered a new amusement, to bathe his horse in the Térek.) The landlady was in the dairy, from the chimney of which rose the dense black smoke of the oven in which a fire had just been kindled; the girl was milking the buffalo cow in the stall. "Stand still, accursed one!" was heard her impatient voice, and soon after followed the even sound of milking.

On the street, near the house, was heard the brisk tramp of the horse, and Olénin, on his beautiful, dark gray horse, shining with wet, rode bareback up to the gate. Maryánka's fair head, wrapped in a red kerchief, stuck out of the stall and again disappeared. Olénin wore a red shirt of Persian silk, a white mantle, girded by a leather strap with a dagger in it, and a tall cap. He sat rather jauntily on the wet back of his well-fed horse, and, holding his gun on his back, bent over to open the gate. His hair was still wet, his face was aglow with youth and health.

He thought he was handsome, agile, and resembling a brave; but that was a mistake. To the eye of every experienced inhabitant of the Caucasus he was still a soldier. When he noticed the girl's head thrust forward, he made a special effort to bend down gracefully, and, opening the gate and holding the bridle, cracked his whip, and rode into the yard.

"Is tea ready, Vanyúsha?" he cried, merrily, without looking at the stall. It gave him pleasure to feel his beautiful horse contracting the crupper, begging for loose reins, and swelling every muscle, ready to leap with all feet at once over the fence, and striking the dried up clay of the yard with his hoofs.

"*C'est prêt!*" answered Vanyúsha.

Olénin thought that Maryánka's beautiful head was still looking out of the shed, but he did not glance in that direction. Leaping down from his horse, Olénin caught his gun in the porch; he made an awkward motion, and looked in a frightened manner toward the stall, where no one could be seen, though the even sound of milking was still heard.

He walked into the house, and a little later came out again on the porch, and, with a book and a pipe, sat down to drink his tea on the side which was not yet reached by the oblique rays of the sun. He did not expect to go out in the forenoon, and intended to write some long-delayed letters; but he somehow was loath to leave his snug corner on the porch, and the room appeared like a prison to him. The landlady had built the fire, the girl had driven out the cattle, and, upon returning, began to collect the dung and to sling it against the fence to get it dry.

Olénin was reading, but he did not understand a word of what was said in the book which lay open before him. He kept tearing his eyes away from it, and gazing at the moving figure of the well-built young woman in front of him. Whether she walked into the damp morning shade made by the house, or whether she came out into the middle of the yard, illuminated by the cheerful splendour of the young sun, where her stately figure in the brightly coloured dress gleamed and cast a black shadow, — he was equally afraid of missing even one of her motions. It gave him pleasure to see how freely and gracefully she

bent her frame; how the rose-coloured shirt, which constituted her only attire, draped itself on her bosom and along her shapely legs; how she unbent herself, and how under her tightly fitting shirt the firm lines of her heaving breast stood out; how the narrow soles of her feet, clad in old red shoes, planted themselves on the ground, without changing their form; how her powerful arms, with sleeves rolled up, contracted their muscles as she wielded the shovel as though in anger; and how her deep black eyes sometimes gazed at him. Though her delicate eyebrows now and then gathered into a frown, her eyes expressed pleasure and consciousness of her beauty.

"Well, Olénin, have you been up long?" said Byelétski, in the coat of an officer of the Caucasus, coming into the yard and turning to Olénin.

"Ah! Byelétski!" replied Olénin, extending his hand. "What brings you so early?"

"What can I do? They sent me away. There is a party at my house to-night. Maryánka, you will come to Ústenka's?" he said, turning to the girl.

Olénin was amazed to hear Byelétski address that woman in such a familiar fashion. But Maryánka, as though not hearing what he said, bent her head, and, throwing the shovel across her shoulder, walked to the dairy with her brisk, manly strides.

"She is embarrassed, my friend, she is embarrassed," Byelétski said, as she walked away, "she is embarrassed in your presence," and, smiling cheerfully, he ran up the steps.

"What party is that? Who has sent you away?"

"At Ústenka's, my landlady's, there is a party, and you are invited. A party, — that is, cakes and a gathering of girls."

"What are we going to do there?"

Byelétski smiled slyly, and, winking, pointed with his head to the dairy where Maryánka had disappeared.

Olénin shrugged his shoulders and blushed.

"Upon my word, you are a strange man!" he said. "Well, tell me!"

Olénin scowled. Byelétski noticed this, and smiled, as though begging his pardon. "Really, I pray," he said, "you are living in the same house with her; and she is such a fine girl, an excellent girl, a perfect beauty —"

"A wonderful beauty! I have never seen such women before!" said Olénin.

"Well?" asked Byelétski, quite perplexed.

"It may be strange," replied Olénin, "but why should I not tell the truth? Women, it seems, have not existed for me ever since I have been living here. And it is good so, really it is! Well, what can we have in common with these women? It is different with Eróshka; we have a common passion — hunting."

"Well, I declare! What is there in common? What have I in common with Amália Ivánovna? It is the same thing. You will say that they are rather dirty. That is another matter. *A la guerre, comme à la guerre!*"

"But I have never known any Amália Ivánovnas, and never could get along with them," replied Olénin. "But one could not respect those women, whereas these here I respect."

"Keep on respecting them! Nobody prevents you!"

Olénin did not reply. He evidently wanted to finish what he had begun to say. It lay near to his heart.

"I know that I am an exception." (He was evidently embarrassed.) "My life has arranged itself in such a way that I see no necessity whatsoever of changing my rules; I could not even live here, let alone live as happily, as I do, if I lived in your fashion. And besides, I am looking for something else, and see something quite different from what you do."

Byelétski raised his brows incredulously.

"All the same, come to my house to-night. Maryánka will be there, and I will make you acquainted. Do come! Well, if you find it dull you can go away. Will you come?"

"I would come; but, to tell you the truth, I am seriously afraid of being carried away."

"Oh, oh, oh!" cried Byelétski. "Only come, and I will keep you down. Will you come? Your word of honour?"

"I would come, but, really, I do not understand what we shall do there, and what part we shall play there."

"Please, I beg you. Will you come?"

"Yes, I will, perhaps," said Olénin.

"You see for yourself that here are the most charming women in the world, and yet you live like a monk! Who would ever think of such a thing? Who would want to spoil his life, and not to make use of what there is? Have you heard, our company will go to Vozdvizhénskaya?"

"Hardly. I was told that Company Eight is going," said Olénin.

"No, I have received a letter from the adjutant. He writes that the prince himself will be in the expedition. I am glad of it, — I shall see him. I am beginning to be bored here."

"They say there will be an incursion soon."

"I have not heard it; but I have heard that Krinovítsyn got an Anna decoration for services in an excursion. He expected a lieutenancy," said Byelétski, laughing. "That was a disappointment to him. He has gone to see the staff about it — "

It was growing dark, and Olénin began to think of the evening party. The invitation tormented him. He wanted to go, but the thought of what was going to happen there seemed to him strange, preposterous, and a little terrifying. He knew that there would be there no Cossacks, no old women, but only girls. What would happen there? How

was he to conduct himself? What was he to say? What would they say? What relations were there between him and those wild Cossack girls? Byelétski had been telling him of such strange, cynical, and at the same time strict relations — It was strange to him to think that he would be there in one room with Maryánka, and that, perhaps, he would have to speak to her. This seemed impossible to him whenever he recalled her majestic bearing. Byelétski had told him that all that was quite simple. "Is it possible Byelétski would treat Maryánka in the same manner? It would be interesting," he thought. "No, I had better not go. All this is vile, and contemptible, and, above all, leads to nothing." But again the question tormented him: "What will it be?" and he was to a certain extent bound by his promise. He went, still undecided what to do, but upon reaching Byelétski's he stepped in.

The cabin in which Byelétski lived was just like Olénin's. It was raised on posts about six feet from the ground, and consisted of two rooms. In the first, which Olénin reached by a steep little staircase, lay feather beds, rugs, quilts, and pillows, beautifully and elegantly piled up against each other in Cossack fashion along the front wall. On the side walls hung brass basins and weapons; under the bench lay watermelons and pumpkins. In the second room was a large oven, a table, benches, and Dissenter images. Here Byelétski had his lodgings, with his folding bed, travelling portmanteaus, rug, on which his weapons were hanging, and with toilet articles and portraits scattered about the table. A silk dressing-gown was flung upon a bench. Byelétski himself, handsome and clean, lay in his underwear on the bed, reading "Les Trois Mousquetaires."

Byelétski jumped up.

"You see how I am fixed? Fine? I am glad you have come. They have been working terribly. Do you

know what a pie is made of? Of dough, with lard and grapes. But that is not the point. Just see how busy they are!"

Indeed, as they looked out of the window, they saw an unusual turmoil in the landlady's cabin. The girls kept running in and out of the vestibule, with one thing or another.

"Will it be soon?" cried Byelétski.

"Right away! Are you starved, grandfather?" and melodious laughter was heard in the cabin.

Ústenka, plump, red-cheeked, pretty, with rolled up sleeves, ran into Byelétski's room to fetch the plates.

"Keep away! I almost broke the plates," she shrieked at Byelétski. "You had better go and help us," she cried, laughing, at Olénin. "And get the cakes and candy for the girls."

"Has Maryánka come?" asked Byelétski.

"Of course. She brought some dough."

"Do you know," said Byelétski, "if one were to dress up this Ústenka, and clean her up a little, and primp her, she would be more beautiful than any of our beauties. Have you seen the Cossack woman Bórshchev? She married a colonel. Superb! What *dignité!* Where did they get it all —"

"I have not seen Mrs. Bórshchev; but, in my opinion, there can be nothing more beautiful than this attire."

"Ah, I can so easily adapt myself to any life!" said Byelétski, drawing a sigh of delight. "I will go and take a look at what they are doing."

He put on his dressing-gown, and ran out.

"You take care of the refreshments!" he cried.

Olénin sent Byelétski's orderly for cake and honey. It seemed so detestable to him to give money, as though he were bribing some one, that he did not give any definite answer to the orderly's question, "How many peppermint-cakes, and how many honey-cakes?"

"I leave it to you."

"For all this money?" the old soldier asked, significantly. "Peppermint-cakes cost more. They sell them at sixteen kopeks."

"For all the money, for all," said Olénin, sitting down at the window and wondering why it was his heart was fluttering as though he were preparing himself to do something important but bad.

He heard shouting and screaming in the room where the girls were, the moment Byéletski had entered there, and a few minutes later he saw him jump out from it and run down the stairs, accompanied by shrieks, laughter, and a general hubbub.

"They have driven me out," he said.

A few minutes later, Ústenka came into the room and solemnly invited the guests, announcing that everything was ready.

When they entered the room, they really found everything ready, and Ústenka was arranging the feather pillows against the wall. On the table, which was covered with a disproportionately small napkin, stood a decanter of red wine and some dried fish. The room was redolent with pastry and grapes. Some six girls, in holiday half-coats and with bare heads, contrary to the common rule, were keeping in the corner behind the oven, whispering, laughing, and giggling.

"I beg you humbly to honour my patron saint," said Ústenka, inviting the guests to the table.

Olénin had discovered Maryánka in the crowd of girls, who were all without exception beautiful, and he felt annoyed and pained because he made her closer acquaintance under such awkward and detestable circumstances. He felt foolish and uncomfortable, and decided to follow Byelétski's example. Byelétski went up to the table somewhat solemnly, but with ease and self-confidence, drank a glass to Ústenka's health, and invited the rest to

do likewise. Ustenka declared that the girls did not drink.

"With honey we could," said a voice in the crowd of the girls.

The orderly, who had just returned from the shop with the honey and the refreshments, was called in. The orderly glanced with a scowl, partly of envy, and partly of contempt, at the gentlemen, who, in his opinion, were having a celebration, carefully and scrupulously turned over the piece of the honeycomb and the cakes which were wrapped in gray paper, and began to expatiate on the cost of the articles, and the change he had brought back; but Byelétski drove him away.

After mixing the honey with the wine in the glasses, and lavishly scattering the three pounds of cakes on the table, Byelétski pulled the girls out of the corner by force, put them down at the table, and began to distribute the cakes among them.

Olénin involuntarily noticed how Maryánka's small sunburnt hand took hold of two round peppermint and one honey cake, and how she was in doubt what to do with them. The conversation was constrained and cheerless, in spite of Ústenka's and Byelétski's vivacity, and their attempts to cheer up the company. Olénin was embarrassed, brooded over something to say, and felt that he was rousing their curiosity, perhaps provoking their ridicule, and communicating his bashfulness to the others. He blushed, and it seemed to him that Maryánka in particular was ill at ease.

"No doubt they are waiting for us to give them some money," he thought. "How are we going to do it? Let us give it to them as soon as possible and go!"

XXV.

"How is it you do not know your lodger?" said Byelétski, turning to Maryánka.

"How am I to know him if he never comes to see us?" said Maryánka, casting a glance upon Olénin.

Olénin was startled, and his face was flushed. He answered, without knowing himself what he was saying: "I am afraid of your mother. She scolded me so the first time I called at your house."

Maryánka laughed out loud.

"So you were scared?" she said, glancing at him, and turning her head away.

That was then the first time Olénin had seen the whole face of the beautiful girl, for heretofore he had seen it only wrapped in a kerchief down to her eyes. There was good reason why she was regarded as the most beautiful girl in the village. Ústenka was a pretty girl, petite, plump, ruddy, with laughing hazel eyes, with an eternal smile on her rosy lips, for ever giggling and prattling. Maryánka, on the contrary, was by no means pretty, she was a beauty! Her features might have appeared too masculine and almost coarse, had it not been for her tall, stately form, and her powerful chest and shoulders, and chiefly for the stern and yet gentle expression of her wide black eyes, surrounded by a deep shadow beneath black brows, and for the gentle expression of her mouth and of her smile. She rarely smiled, but her smile was so much the more effective. She exhaled virgin strength and health. All the girls were pretty; but they themselves,

and Byelétski, and the orderly who had brought the cakes, all could not help looking at Maryánka, and when they addressed the girls, they turned to her in particular. She appeared as a proud and happy queen among the rest.

Byelétski endeavoured to maintain the decorum of the evening entertainment. He chattered without cessation, urged the girls to pass the wine, joked with them, and continually made improper remarks to Olénin in French about Maryánka's beauty, calling her "yours," *la vôtre*, and inviting him to follow his example. Olénin felt more oppressed. He was thinking of an excuse to walk out and run away, when Byelétski proclaimed that Ústenka, who was celebrating her name-day, should pass the wine with kisses. She consented, but with the condition that money should be placed on her plate, as this is done at weddings.

"The devil has brought me to this abominable feast!" Olénin said to himself, and he arose, intending to leave.

"Where are you going?"

"I want to fetch the tobacco," he said, intending to run, but Byelétski caught hold of his hand.

"I have some money," he said to him in French.

"There is no getting away; I shall have to pay," Olénin thought, and he was annoyed at his awkwardness. "Why can't I do the same as Byelétski does? I ought not to have come; but having come, I ought not to spoil their pleasure. I must drink in Cossack fashion." Saying this, he seized a wooden bowl that contained about eight glasses, filled it with wine, and almost drained it. The girls looked at him in amazement and almost in terror, while he was drinking. Ústenka passed around one glass more to both of them, and kissed them.

"Girls, we will have a good time now," she said, jingling on her plate the four silver roubles which they had placed there.

Olénin was no longer ill at ease. He became talkative.

"Now, you, Maryánka, pass around the wine with kisses," said Byelétski, seizing her hand.

"That is the kind of kiss I will give you," she said, raising her hand in jest, as though to strike him.

"You may kiss the little grandfather without money," said another girl.

"You are a clever girl!" said Byelétski, kissing the maiden, who was struggling to get away. "No, you pass the wine," insisted Byelétski, turning to Maryánka. "Pass it to your lodger!"

He took her hand, led her up to the bench, and seated her at Olénin's side.

"What a beauty!" he said, turning her head so as to show her profile.

Maryánka made no resistance, but, smiling proudly, surveyed Olénin with her wide eyes.

"She is a beauty!" repeated Byelétski.

"Am I not a beauty?" Maryánka's glance seemed to say. Without being conscious of what he was doing, Olénin embraced Maryánka, and was on the point of kissing her. She suddenly tore herself away, tripped up Byelétski, pulled things down from the table, and jumped to the oven. There were shouts and laughter. Byelétski whispered something to the girls, and suddenly they all rushed out of the room into the vestibule, and locked the door.

"Why did you kiss Byelétski, and won't kiss me?" asked Olénin.

"I just don't want to, and that is all," she answered, twitching her lower lip and her brows. "He is the little grandfather," she added, smiling. She went up to the door and began to knock at it. "What did you lock it for, you devils?"

"Well, let them be there, and we will stay here," said Olénin, approaching her.

She frowned, and pushed him sternly away from her.

And again she appeared to Olénin so majestic and beautiful that he came to his senses and felt ashamed of what he had done. He walked up to the door and tried to pull it open.

"Byelétski, open the door! What stupid jokes!"

Maryánka again laughed her bright, happy laugh.

"Are you afraid of me?" she asked.

"You are just as cross as your mother."

"You ought to sit more with Eróshka, then the girls would like you better," she said, smiling, and, walking up to him, looked him straight in the eyes.

He did not know what to say.

"And if I were to visit you?" he said, suddenly.

"That would be different," she said, shaking her head.

Just then Byelétski pushed the door open, and Maryánka darted away from Olénin, and in doing so her hip struck his leg.

"It is all rubbish what I have been thinking heretofore about love, and self-renunciation, and Lukáshka. There is but one kind of happiness, and he who is happy is right." This thought flashed through Olénin's mind, and, with a force which he had not suspected in himself, he seized beautiful Maryánka, and kissed her temple and cheek. Maryánka did not become angry, but only burst out laughing, and ran out to the other girls.

The evening party ended with this. The old woman, Ustenka's mother, who had just returned from her field labour, scolded all the girls, and drove them away.

XXVI.

"YES," thought Olénin, on his way home, "I only need to give myself free rein, in order to be desperately in love with this Cossack girl."

He went to bed with these feelings; he thought that all this would pass away, and he would return to his old life. But the old life did not return. His relations to Maryánka were changed. The wall which had separated them before was torn down. Olénin now exchanged greetings with her every time they met.

When the landlord arrived in order to receive the money for the lodgings, and learned of Olénin's wealth and liberality, he invited him to his house. The old woman received him kindly, and since the day of the evening entertainment Olénin frequently went in to see them, and on these occasions stayed until night. Apparently his life in the village ran as of old, but in his heart everything had completely changed. He passed his days in the forest, but about eight o'clock, when it began to grow dark, he generally went over to the ensign's house, alone, or with Uncle Eróshka. The people became so accustomed to him that they wondered whenever he did not come.

He paid well for his wine, and was a peaceful man. Vanyúsha would bring him his tea. He would seat himself in the corner near the oven. The old woman was not embarrassed by his presence, and went on with her work; and they chatted over their tea and over their wine about Cossack affairs, about their neighbours, and

about Russia, of which Olénin told them in reply to their questions.

At times he would take a book and read to himself. Maryánka, as wild as a goat, would draw up her feet and sit on the oven or in a dark corner. She did not take part in the conversation, but Olénin saw her eyes and face, heard her moving, and cracking seeds, and felt that she listened with all her being when he spoke, and he was conscious of her presence when he was reading in silence. At times it seemed to him that her eyes were directed upon him, and when he caught their sparkle, he involuntarily grew silent, and gazed upon her. Then she would hide herself, and he, pretending to be interested in his conversation with the old woman, listened to her breathing, to every motion of hers, and again awaited her glance. In the presence of others she generally was cheerful and pleasant to him, but when she was left alone with him, she grew incommunicative and rude. Sometimes he came to see them when Maryánka had not yet returned from the street; suddenly her firm steps could be heard, and her blue chintz shirt flashed by the open door. She would walk into the middle of the room and notice his presence, — and a faint smile of recognition would appear on her lips, and he would be overcome by a sensation of happiness and terror.

He asked nothing, wished nothing of her, but with every day her presence became more and more a necessity to him.

Olénin became so accustomed to the life of the village, that the past appeared to him as something quite foreign, and the future, especially outside of the world he lived in, did not interest him at all. When he received letters from home, from relatives and friends, he felt aggrieved because they mourned him as a lost man, whereas he, in his village, regarded those as lost who did not lead the life he was leading. He was convinced that he should

never regret his having torn himself away from his former life, and his living this peculiar life in the seclusion of his village. He was happy in expeditions and in the fortresses; but only here, under Uncle Eróshka's wing, in his forest, in his cabin on the outskirt of the village, but especially at the thought of Maryánka and Lukáshka, he clearly discerned the whole lie of his former life, which had provoked him even there, but which only now appeared inexpressibly contemptible and ridiculous to him.

Here he felt himself each day more and more free, and more a man. The Caucasus presented itself to him quite differently from what he had imagined it to be. He had found nothing resembling all his dreams and all the descriptions of the Caucasus of which he had heard or read.

"There are here no chestnut steeds, no cataracts, no Amalát-beks, no heroes, and no brigands," he thought. "People live here as does Nature; they die, they are born, they pair, again they are born, they fight, they drink, they eat, they have pleasure, and again they die, and there are no conditions, except those unchangeable ones which Nature has imposed upon the sun, the grass, the beasts, and the trees. They have no other laws."

For this very reason these people appeared to him, compared with himself, so beautiful, strong, and free, and gazing upon them, he felt ashamed of himself and sad. He often seriously considered throwing up everything, enrolling himself as a Cossack, buying a cabin and cattle, and marrying a Cossack maiden, — not Maryánka, whom he had renounced in favour of Lukáshka, — and living with Uncle Eróshka, fishing and hunting with him, and going on expeditions with the Cossacks.

"Why don't I do that? What am I waiting for?" he asked himself. And he egged himself on and put himself to shame: "Am I afraid to do that which I myself have found to be sensible and just? Is the desire to

be a simple Cossack, to live close to Nature, to do no one any harm, but, on the contrary, to do people some good, — is the dream of all this more stupid than the dreams I used to have, — for example, to be a minister, or a general?"

But a voice told him to wait, and not to be in a hurry. He was restrained by a dim consciousness that he could not live entirely Eróshka's and Lukáshka's life, because his happiness was of a different nature, — he was restrained by the thought that happiness consisted in self-renunciation. His act toward Lukáshka did not cease to give him pleasure. He continually searched for opportunities to sacrifice himself for others, but these opportunities did not present themselves. At times he forgot this newly discovered recipe for happiness, and considered himself capable of living entirely Eróshka's life; but then he would suddenly come to his senses again, and cling once more to the thought of conscious self-renunciation, and on the basis of this thought he would calmly and proudly look upon all people and upon the happiness of others.

XXVII.

BEFORE the vintage, Lukáshka came on horseback to see Olénin. He looked even more dashing than usual.

"Well, are you going to get married?" Olénin asked, giving him a warm reception.

Lukáshka gave no direct answer.

"You see, I have swapped off your horse across the river. This is a horse! It is a Kabardá horse from Lov's stud Távro. I can tell a good horse."

They examined the new steed, and made him go through various evolutions in the yard. He was indeed an uncommonly good animal; he was a bay gelding, broad and long, with the glossy hair, bushy tail, and soft, delicate mane and withers of a thoroughbred. He was so plump that one could go to sleep on his back, as Lukáshka expressed it. His hoofs, eyes, and teeth were as delicate and sharply outlined as they only are in horses of the purest breed. Olénin could not help admiring the horse. He had not seen such a beauty in the Caucasus.

"And how he rides!" said Lukáshka, patting his neck. "What a canter! And he is so intelligent! He follows his master."

"Did you give much to boot?" asked Olénin.

"I did not count," replied Lukáshka, smiling. "I got it from a chum."

"It is a wonderfully fine horse! How much will you take for it?" asked Olénin.

"I was offered one hundred and fifty roubles, but I will give him to you for nothing," Lukáshka said, merrily.

"Say the word, and you shall have him. I will take off the saddle, and you may take him."

"No, under no condition."

"Well, then I have brought you a memento," said Lukáshka, ungirding himself, and taking down one of the two daggers that were stuck in the belt. "I got it beyond the river."

"Thank you!"

"Mother told me she would herself bring you some grapes."

"That is not necessary, for we will square up accounts some day. I am not going to give you any money for it."

"How could that be among chums? Giréy-khan, the one across the river, took me to his house, and told me to select any I pleased. So I took this sabre. Such is the custom among us."

They went into the room and took a drink.

"Well, are you going to stay here awhile?" asked Olénin.

"No, I have come to say farewell. They are sending me away from the cordon to a company beyond the Térek. I am leaving to-day with friend Nazárka."

"And when will the wedding be?"

"I will soon come down here for the betrothal, and then back again to my duty," Lukáshka replied, reluctantly.

"How is that? Will you not go in to see your bride?"

"No! What's the use of looking at her? When you are out on a campaign, ask at our company for Lukáshka the Broad. There are a lot of wild boars there! I have killed two myself. I will show you the place."

"Well, good-bye! Christ preserve you!"

Lukáshka mounted his horse, and, without showing himself to Maryánka, made some evolutions as he rode out into the street, where Nazárka was already waiting for him.

"Well? Sha'n't we go in?" asked Nazárka, winking in the direction where Yámka lived.

"Here," said Lukáshka, "take my horse over to her place, and if I am not back for a long time, give him some hay. In the morning I will be in the company."

"Didn't the yunker give you another present?"

"No! I am glad I got off with a dagger, for he was beginning to ask for the horse," said Lukáshka, dismounting and turning the horse over to Nazárka.

He darted into the yard under Olénin's very window, and went up to the window of the ensign's cabin. It was quite dark. Maryánka, in nothing but her shirt, was combing her braid, previous to going to bed.

"It is I," whispered the Cossack.

Maryánka's face bore an austerely indifferent expression, but it suddenly grew animated the moment she heard her name. She raised the window, and leaned out of it, with an expression of fear and joy.

"What is it? What do you want?" she said.

"Open the door!" said Lukáshka. "Let me in for a little while! It is dreadfully dull without you!"

He took her head in his arms, through the window, and kissed it.

"Really, open the door!"

"What is the use of speaking foolish things! I told you I will not let you in. Are you here for long?"

He did not answer, and only kept kissing her. And she was satisfied.

"You see, it is not so easy to hug you through the window," said Lukáshka.

"Maryánushka!" was heard the old woman's voice. "Who is there with you?"

Lukáshka took off his cap so as not to be recognized, and crouched under the window.

"Begone at once!" whispered Maryánka.

"Lukáshka was here," she replied to her mother. "He was asking for father."

"Well, send him here!"

"He is gone. He said he had no time."

Indeed, Lukáshka, bending down, ran with rapid steps from the window, and out of the yard, and away to Yámka's; none but Olénin had seen him. After drinking about two bowls of wine, he and Nazárka rode out of the village. The night was warm, dark, and calm. They rode in silence, and only the thud of the horses' hoofs was heard. Lukáshka started a song about Cossack Mingál, but, without finishing the first verse, he stopped and turned to Nazárka.

"You know she did not let me in!" he said.

"Oh!" exclaimed Nazárka. "I knew she would not let you in. Do you know what Yámka told me? She said the yunker is now keeping company with her. Uncle Eróshka was bragging that he got a fowling-piece from the yunker for getting him Maryánka."

"He is lying, the devil!" Lukáshka said, angrily. "She is not that kind of girl. But I will smash the ribs of the old devil," and he started his favourite song.

"From the village it was, from Izmáylovo,
From the well-loved garden of the nobleman,
There a clear-eyed falcon from the garden flew;
And right after him a young huntsman rode,
And the clear-eyed falcon to his right hand he called.
The clear-eyed falcon gave this answer:
'You did not know how to keep me in the golden cage,
Nor knew how to hold me in your right hand,
So now I will fly to the blue sea;
There I myself will kill the white swan,
And of the swan's sweet flesh I will have my fill.'"

XXVIII.

THE ensign was celebrating the betrothal. Lukáshka was in the village, but did not call on Olénin. Olénin himself did not go to the celebration, to which the ensign had invited him. He felt sadder than he had felt since his arrival in the village. He saw Lukáshka, in his best attire, walk in the evening with his mother to the ensign's, and he was tormented by the thought that Lukáshka was cold to him. Olénin shut himself up in his room, and began to write his diary.

"I have thought much and changed much of late," wrote Olénin, "and I have reached the truth which is written in the A B C book. In order to be happy, I must do this one thing, — love, and love with self-renunciation, love all and everything, and spread on all sides the spider-web of love: I must take all who fall into it. Thus I have taken Vanyúsha, Uncle Eróshka, Lukáshka, Maryánka."

As Olénin was finishing this sentence, Uncle Eróshka came in to see him. Eróshka was in the happiest frame of mind. When calling upon him one evening a few days before, Olénin found him in his yard engaged, with a happy and proud mien, in deftly flaying the carcass of a wild boar with a small knife. His dogs, and among them his favourite Lyam, were lying about, softly wagging their tails, and looking at his work. The urchins respectfully watched him from over the fence, and did not even tease him, as was their custom. The women of his neighbourhood, who were not as a rule especially kind to him, saluted him, and brought him, one a little jug of red

wine, another some boiled cream, and a third some pastry. The next morning Eróshka was sitting in his shed, all covered with blood, and selling wild boar meat by the pound, either for money, or for wine. On his face it was written, "God has given me luck, and I have killed a wild boar; now everybody needs the uncle." In consequence of this he, naturally, took to drinking, and this was the fourth day of his spree, during which he had not left the village. In addition to this, he had been drinking at the betrothal.

Uncle Eróshka came away from the ensign's cabin dead drunk, with a flushed face, and dishevelled beard, but in a new red half-coat, embroidered with galloons, and with a gourd balaláyka, which he had brought with him from across the river. He had long ago promised Olénin this pleasure, and was now in the proper mood for it. When he saw that Olénin was busy writing, he was disappointed.

"Write, write, my father," he said, in a whisper, as though supposing that a spirit was sitting between him and the paper, and, fearing to disturb him, he sat down noiselessly and softly on the floor. Olénin cast a look at him, ordered some wine, and continued to write. It was dull for Eróshka to drink alone. He wanted to chat.

"I have been to the betrothal at the ensign's. But they are swine! I don't want them! And so I came here."

"Where did you get that balaláyka?" asked Olénin, continuing to write.

"I went across the river, my father, and got the balaláyka," he said, in just as soft a voice. "I am a great hand at playing. I can play Tartar, Cossack, gentlemen's, soldiers' songs, any you may wish."

Olénin glanced at him a second time, smiled, and continued to write.

His smile encouraged the old man.

"Throw it away, my father! Throw it away!" he suddenly exclaimed, resolutely. "Well, suppose they have insulted you! Give them up, spit at the whole affair! What are you writing and writing for? What sense is there?"

And he mocked Olénin, tapping his stout fingers on the floor, and screwing his puffed-up face into a contemptuous grimace.

"What is the use of writing documents? Celebrate, and you will be a fine fellow!"

About writing his head could form no other conception than that it was for some dangerous pettifoggery.

Olénin burst out laughing, and so did Eróshka. He sprang up from the floor, and began to show off his art of playing his balaláyka and singing Tartar songs.

"What is the use writing, my good man! You will do better to listen to what I will sing to you! When you are dead, you will not hear any songs. Celebrate!"

At first he sang a song of his own composition, with dancing accompaniment:

"A di-di-di-di-di-li,
Did you see him? Where was he?
In the market in a store,
Selling pins by the score."

Then he sang a song which his former sergeant had taught him:

"On Monday in love I fell,
All Tuesday I suffered woe,
On Wednesday I to her did tell,
On Thursday was no answer, though.
On Friday came her reply,
Not to wait for any joy.
And on Saturday I swore
That on earth I'd live no more;
But on Sunday changed my mind, —
Cast my sorrow to the wind."

And again:

"A di-di-di-di-di-li,
Did you see him? Where was he?"

Then, winking, twitching his shoulders, and dancing, he sang:

"I will kiss thee, will embrace thee,
With red ribbons will I lace thee,
Hope I'll name thee, — hope to me!
Dost thou love me faithfully?"

And he became so excited that he posed in dashing attitudes, playing his instruments all the while, and started whirling over the room.

"Di-di-li," and other gentlemen's songs he sang only for Olénin. Later in the evening, when he had drunk another three glasses of red wine, he recalled bygone days, and sang genuine Cossack and Tartar songs. In the middle of one of his favourite songs, his voice suddenly quivered, and he grew silent, continuing only to strum his balaláyka.

"Ah! my dear friend!" he said.

Olénin turned his eyes upon him, when he heard the strange sound of his voice: the old man was weeping. Tears stood in his eyes, and one tear trickled down his cheek.

"Gone is my youth, it will never return," he said, sobbing, and grew silent. "Drink! Why don't you drink?" he suddenly shouted, in his deafening voice, without wiping away his tears.

He was stirred more especially by a mountain song. There were but few words in it, and the whole charm consisted in the melancholy refrain, "Ay! Day! Dalalay!" Eróshka translated the words of the song:

"The young brave took his plunder from the village into the mountain; the Russians came, burnt the village, killed all the men, and took all the women prisoners.

The young brave returned from the mountains: where the village had been was a waste; his mother was not; his brothers were not; his house was not; one tree alone was standing. The brave sat down under the tree and wept: 'Alone, like thee, alone am I left!' and the brave began to sing, 'Ay! Day! Dalalay!'"

And this moaning, heartrending refrain the old man repeated several times.

Having finished the last refrain, Eróshka suddenly seized the gun from the wall, darted out into the yard, and fired off both barrels into the air. And he sang again, more mournfully still, "Ay! Day! Dalalay a-a!" and stopped.

Olénin had followed him out on the porch, and was silently gazing at the dark, starry heaven, in the direction where the fire from the gun had flashed. The ensign's house was lighted up, and voices were heard there. In the yard a bevy of girls were crowding near the porch and the windows, and running from the dairy to the vestibule. A few Cossacks rushed out of the vestibule and, unable to restrain themselves, gave the war-cry, to express their approbation of Uncle Eróshka's refrain and shots.

"Why are you not at the betrothal?" asked Olénin.

"God be with them! God be with them!" said the old man, who had evidently been offended there in some manner. "I do not like them! I do not like them! Ah, what a people! Let us go into the room! They are celebrating by themselves, and we by ourselves."

Olénin returned to his room.

"Well, and is Lukáshka happy? Will he not come to see me?" he asked.

"Lukáshka? People have told him a lie: they have told him that I had brought the girl to you," said the old man, in a whisper. "The girl? She will be ours, if we want her; give more money, and she will be ours! I will do it for you, truly I will."

"No, uncle, money will not accomplish anything, if she does not love. You had better not speak of it."

"We are both disliked, — we are orphans," suddenly said Uncle Eróshka, and again burst into tears.

Olénin drank more than usual, while listening to the old man's stories.

"Now, my Lukáshka is happy," he thought; but he was sad. The old man was so drunk that evening that he fell down on the floor, and Vanyúsha had to call in the aid of some soldiers, and then use all his strength to drag him out. He was so furious at the old man for his bad behaviour that he did not say anything in French.

XXIX.

It was the month of August. For several days in succession there had not been a cloud in the sky. The sun's heat was intolerable, and from early morning blew a hot wind, raising clouds of burning sand from the dunes and the roads, and carrying it in the air over the reeds, trees, and villages. The grass and the leaves of the trees were covered with dust; the roads and salt marshes were dry, and sounded hollow when trod upon. The water in the Térek had been low for a long time, and it rapidly disappeared and dried up in the ditches. The miry shore of the pond near the village, all trampled up by the cattle, looked bare, and the whole day long could be heard the splashing and shouting of the boys and girls in the water.

In the steppe the dunes and reeds were drying up, and the cattle, lowing during the day, ran away into the fields. The wild animals had wandered away into distant reeds, and into the mountains beyond the Térek. Gnats and little flies hovered in swarms over the lowlands and villages. The snow-capped mountains were shrouded in gray mist. The air was rare and ill-smelling. Abréks were said to have forded the shoaling river, and to be galloping on this side. The sun set each evening in a fiery red glow.

It was the busiest time of the year. The whole population of the villages swarmed in the melon fields and in the vineyards. The gardens were wildly overgrown with twining verdure that afforded a cool, dense shade. From

all sides could be seen the heavy clusters of ripe black grapes amidst the broad sunlit leaves. Over the dusty roads, which led to the gardens, slowly proceeded the squeaking ox-carts, loaded to the top with the black grapes. On the dusty road lay clusters that were crushed by the wheels. Little boys and girls, in shirts soiled with grape-juice, ran after their mothers, with bunches in their hands and mouths. On the road one constantly met ragged labourers, carrying on their powerful shoulders wicker baskets full of grapes.

Girls, wrapped in kerchiefs up to the eyes, led the oxen that were hitched to the heavily laden carts. Soldiers, meeting the Cossack girls, asked them for some grapes, and they, climbing upon the carts, while they were in motion, would take large handfuls and throw them into the soldiers' outstretched coat flaps.

In some yards they were already pressing the grapes. The air was redolent with the grape-skins. Blood-red troughs could be seen under the sheds, and Nogáy labourers, with their trouser legs rolled up and their calves stained, were to be seen in the yards. The pigs snorted as they feasted on the skins, and wallowed in them. The flat roofs of the dairies were thickly covered with dark, amber clusters drying in the sun. Crows and magpies, picking up the seeds, pressed close to the roofs, and flitted from place to place.

The fruits of the year's labours were joyfully gathered, and the fruit of the year's harvest was uncommonly abundant and good.

In the shady green vineyards, amidst a sea of grape-vines, on all sides sounded laughter, songs, merriment, feminine voices, and flashed by the bright, coloured dresses of women.

Precisely at noon, Maryánka was sitting in her garden, in the shade of a peach-tree, and taking out a dinner for the family from the unhitched cart. In front of her, the

ensign, who had returned from his school, was sitting on a horse-blanket that was spread on the ground, and washing his hands by pouring water upon them from a small pitcher. Her little brother, who had just come up from the pond, and was wiping his face with his sleeves, was restlessly watching his sister and his mother, in expectation of the dinner, and panting heavily.

The old mother, with sleeves rolled up over her sunburnt arms, was placing grapes, dried fish, boiled cream, and bread on a low, round Tartar table. Having wiped his hands, the ensign doffed his cap, made the sign of the cross, and moved up to the table. The boy grasped the pitcher and began to drink eagerly. The mother and the daughter, drawing their feet under them, sat down at the table.

But the heat was also insufferable in the shade. There was a stench in the air over the garden. The strong, warm wind, which blew through the branches, did not bring any freshness, but only monotonously waved the tops of the pear, peach, and mulberry trees that were scattered through the gardens. The ensign, having said another prayer, brought out from behind his back a jug of red wine that was covered with a grape-vine leaf, and having drunk from the mouth of it, handed it to the old woman. The ensign wore nothing but his shirt, which was open at the neck and disclosed his muscular and hairy chest. His thin, cunning face was cheerful. Neither his attitude nor his speech betrayed his customary shrewdness: he was happy and natural.

"Shall we finish up with the strip behind the shed this evening?" he asked, wiping his wet beard.

"We shall, if only the weather will hold. The Démkins have not yet harvested one-half," she added. "Ústenka alone is working, and she is killing herself."

"What else did you expect?" the old man said, proudly.

"Here, take a drink, Maryánushka!" said the old

woman, passing the jug to the girl. "Now, if God will grant it, we shall have the money with which to celebrate your wedding," said the old woman.

"That's ahead yet," said the ensign, slightly frowning.

The girl lowered her head.

"But why not speak of it?" said the old woman. "The affair has been settled, and the time is not far off."

"Don't talk of the future," again said the ensign. "Now is the time for harvesting."

"Have you seen Lukáshka's new horse?" asked the old woman. "The one Dmítri Andréevich had given him, he has no longer; he has swapped him off."

"No, I have not seen him. I have been talking to-day with the lodger's servant," said the ensign. "He says he has again received a thousand roubles."

"A rich man, in short," the old woman confirmed his statement.

The whole family was happy and contented.

The work proceeded satisfactorily. There was a greater abundance of grapes than usual, and they were better than they had expected.

Having eaten her dinner, Maryánka gave the oxen some grass, folded her half-coat under her head, and lay down under the cart, on the trampled, succulent grass. She was clad in nothing but a red silk kerchief on her head, and a faded blue chintz shirt; but she felt intolerably hot. Her face was burning; her legs moved restlessly; her eyes were covered with a film of sleep and weariness; her lips opened involuntarily, and her breast heaved high and heavily.

The harvest-time had begun two weeks ago, and the hard, uninterrupted work had occupied all the life of the young girl. She jumped up from bed with the dawn, washed her face in cold water, wrapped herself with a kerchief, and ran barefooted to the cattle. She hastily put on her shoes and her half-coat, and, tying some bread

in a bundle, hitched the oxen, and went for the whole day to the vineyard. There she rested but one hour; she cut the grapes and carried the baskets, and in the evening, merry and not at all tired, she returned to the village, leading the oxen by a rope, and urging them on with a long stick. After housing the cattle in the twilight, she filled her wide shirt-sleeve with seeds, and went to the corner to laugh with the girls. But the moment the evening glow gave place to darkness, she walked back to the house, and, having eaten her supper in the dark dairy, with her father, her mother, and her little brother, she walked into the room, free from cares and healthy, and seated herself on the oven and, half-dozing, listened to the lodger's conversation. The moment he left, she threw herself down on the bed, and slept until morning a quiet, sound sleep. The next day was the same. She had not seen Lukáshka since the betrothal, and she quietly awaited the day of her wedding. She was now accustomed to the lodger, and it gave her pleasure to feel his steady glance resting upon her.

XXX.

THOUGH it was impossible to find a comfortable place in the heat, and the gnats were circling in swarms in the cool shade of the cart, and the boy, tossing, kept pushing her, Maryánka drew her kerchief over her head, and was going to sleep, when Ústenka, her neighbour, suddenly came running to her and, darting under the cart, lay down alongside her.

"Now, sleep, girls, sleep!" said Ústenka, finding a place under the cart. "Hold on," she exclaimed, "that will not do!"

She jumped up, broke off some green branches, placed them against the wheels of the cart, and threw a half-coat over them.

"Let me in," she called out to the little boy, again crawling under the cart. "Cossacks ought not to stay with the girls! Go!"

When Ustenka was left all alone with her friend under the cart, she suddenly began to hug Maryánka with both her arms, and, pressing close to her, began to kiss her cheeks and neck.

"My dear one! My sweetheart!" she said, breaking out into her delicate, ringing laughter.

"I declare, you have learned this from the little grandfather," replied Maryánka, warding her off. "Come, stop it!"

And both of them burst out laughing so that the mother scolded them.

"Are you jealous?" Ustenka said, in a whisper.

"Don't talk nonsense! Let me sleep! What did you come for?"

But Ústenka would not quiet down.

"I want to tell you something!"

Maryánka raised herself on her elbow, and adjusted the kerchief that had slipped down.

"What is it?"

"I know something about your lodger."

"There is nothing to know," replied Maryánka.

"You are a sly girl!" said Ústenka, nudging her with her elbow, and laughing. "Won't you tell me anything? Does he come to see you?"

"Yes. What of it?" said Maryánka, suddenly blushing.

"Now, I am a simple girl, and will tell everybody. Why should I hide it?" said Ústenka, and her gay, ruddy face assumed a pensive expression. "Am I doing anybody any harm? I love him, that's all!"

"The little grandfather, you mean?"

"Yes."

"That is sinful!" replied Maryánka.

"O Maryánka! When is one to have a good time, if not while one has a girl's freedom? When I marry a Cossack, I shall begin bearing children, and know what cares are. Now, you just marry Lukáshka, then you won't have joy in your mind; but there will be children, and work."

"What of it? Some are quite happy when married. It does not make much difference!" Maryánka answered, calmly.

"Do tell me, what has there been between you and Lukáshka?"

"What? He sent go-betweens. Father put it off for a year; but there has been a betrothal, and in the autumn I am to be married."

"What did he say to you?"

Maryánka smiled.

"What they always say. He said he loved me! He kept asking me to go to the garden with him."

"Just like pitch! I guess you did not go! What a fine fellow he is now! A first-class brave! He is all the time celebrating at the company. The other day our Kírka came down, and told me what a horse he had swapped off! I suppose he feels lonely for you. What else did he say?" Ústenka asked Maryánka.

"You want to know everything," laughed Maryánka. "He once rode up in the night to the window, — he was drunk. He asked me to let him in."

"Well, and you did not let him in?"

"Let him in! When I once say no, that's the end of it! I am as firm as a rock," Maryánka replied, seriously.

"He is a fine fellow! Let him only want it, and no girl will disdain him!"

"Let him go to other girls," Maryánka answered, proudly.

"Are you not sorry for him?"

"I am, but I will commit no folly. That is wrong."

Ústenka suddenly lowered her head on her friend's breast, embraced her with both her hands, and shook with laughter that was choking her.

"You are a stupid fool!" she said, out of breath. "You do not want any happiness," and again she began to tickle Maryánka.

"Oh, stop!" said Maryánka, screaming through her laughter. "You have crushed Lazútka."

"Just look at the devils! What fun! Stop it!" was heard the drowsy voice of the old woman beyond the cart.

"You do not want any happiness," repeated Ústenka, in a whisper, half sitting up. "And you are a lucky girl, upon my word! How you are loved! You are

pockmarked, but you are loved. Ah, if I were in your place, I would twist that lodger around my little finger! I watched him when you were at our house; he looked as though he would eat you with his eyes. My little grandfather has given me a lot of things! But yours, you know, is the richest among the Russians. His orderly said that they had serfs of their own."

Maryánka arose, and smiled, pensively.

"This is what he, the lodger, once told me," she said, biting a blade of grass. "He said, 'I should like to be Cossack Lukáshka, or your little brother, Lazútka.' What did he say that for?"

"He was just saying anything that came into his head," replied Ústenka. "Mine does say such a lot of things! Like a crazy man!"

Maryánka fell with her head on the folded half-coat, threw her arm around Ústenka's shoulder, and closed her eyes.

"He wanted to come to-day to the vineyard to work. Father invited him," she said, after a moment's silence, and fell asleep.

XXXI.

THE sun had now come out from behind the pear-tree that shaded the cart, and, with its slanting rays that passed through the arbour which Ústenka had built, burnt the faces of the girls who were sleeping under the cart. Maryánka awoke, and began to arrange her kerchief. As she looked around, she saw the lodger beyond the pear-tree, standing with his gun on his shoulder and speaking with her father. She gave Ústenka a push, and, smiling, pointed silently to him.

"I went out yesterday, but did not find one," said Olénin, restlessly looking all about him, but not discovering Maryánka behind the branches.

"You had better go to that district, which you will reach by going along the circumference; there, in the neglected garden, which is called a wilderness, you will always find some hares," said the ensign, at once changing his language.

"Who would think of hunting the hare in vintage time! You would do better if you came to help us! Come and work with the girls!" said the old woman. "Come now, girls, get up!" she cried.

Maryánka and Ústenka were whispering to each other, and could not keep from laughing under the cart.

Ever since it had become known that Olénin had presented Lukáshka with a horse worth fifty roubles, the ensign and his wife had been more friendly to him; the ensign, in particular, was pleased with his closer friendship with his daughter.

"I do not know how to work," said Olénin, trying not to look through the green branches under the cart, where he had espied Maryánka's blue shirt and red kerchief.

"Come along, I will give you some peaches," said the old woman.

"As is the old Cossack hospitality, and mere woman's foolishness," said the ensign, explaining and, as it were, correcting the words of the old woman. "In Russia, I suppose, you have eaten for your pleasure not so much peaches as pineapple preserves and jams."

"So there are some hares in the neglected garden?" asked Olénin. "I will go down there," and, casting a cursory glance through the green branches, he lifted his cap and disappeared between the regular green rows of the vineyard.

The sun was hidden behind the enclosures of the gardens, and its scattered rays were gleaming through the translucent leaves, when Olénin returned to the ensign's vineyard. The wind had subsided, and a fresh coolness was wafted through the vineyards. Even from a distance Olénin instinctively recognized Maryánka's blue shirt through the rows of the grape-vines, and, picking off grapes, he walked up to her. His panting dog also now and then tore off a low hanging bunch with his dripping mouth. With flushed face, rolled up sleeves, and the kerchief falling below her chin, Maryánka deftly cut the heavy clusters and laid them down in wicker baskets. Without letting the vine, which she was holding, out of her hands, she stopped, smiled graciously, and again went to work. Olénin went up to her, and slung his gun over his back, so as to have his hands free.

"Where are your people? God aid you! Are you alone?" was what he wanted to say, but he said nothing, and only raised his cap. He did not feel at ease when he was left alone with Maryánka, but he walked over to her, as though to torment himself.

"You will kill a woman yet, carrying the gun that way," Maryánka said.

"No, I won't!"

They were both silent.

"You had better help me."

He drew out his pocket-knife and began to cut off the clusters in silence. He fetched out from underneath some leaves a heavy, solid bunch, weighing about three pounds, in which the grapes were crowding each other into flattened shapes, and he showed it to Maryánka.

"Shall I cut them all? This one is still green."

"Give it to me!"

Their hands met. Olénin took hers, and she glanced at him, smiling.

"Well, so you are going to get married soon?" he said.

She did not answer, but, turning away from him, gave him a stern look from her eyes.

"Do you love Lukáshka?"

"What is that to you?"

"I am jealous."

"What of it?"

"Really, you are such a beauty!"

And he suddenly had terrible scruples for having said it. His words, he thought, sounded so detestable. He flushed, lost his composure, and took both her hands.

"Such as I am, I am not for you! What are you laughing about?" replied Maryánka, but her glance showed conclusively that she knew he was not laughing.

"Laughing? If you only knew how I —"

His words sounded even more detestable, and less in accord with his feelings; but he continued, "I can't tell what I should be willing to do for you —"

"Keep away, you stick to me like pitch."

But her face, her sparkling eyes, her swelling bosom, her shapely legs, said something quite different. It seemed to him that she understood perfectly how detestable every-

thing was that he had said, but that she was above all such considerations; it seemed to him that she had long known all he wished to say, but could not, and that she only wanted to know how he would say it all. And how could she help knowing it, since he wished to tell her all she herself was? "She does not want to understand, she does not want to answer," he thought.

"Hallo!" suddenly was heard, not far beyond the vineyard, Ústenka's thin voice and her delicate laughter. "Come, Dmítri Andréevich, and help me! I am all alone!" she cried to Olénin, thrusting her round, naïve little face through the leaves.

Olénin did not answer, nor stir from the spot.

Maryánka continued to cut the clusters, but constantly gazed at the lodger. He began to say something, but stopped, shrugged his shoulders, and, shouldering his gun, walked out of the garden with rapid strides.

XXXII.

Once or twice he stopped to listen to the ringing laughter of Maryánka and Ústenka, who, having come together, were shouting something. Olénin passed the whole evening hunting in the woods. He did not bag anything, and returned home after dark. As he crossed the yard, he noticed the open door of the dairy, and the blue shirt flashing by within. He called unusually loud to Vanyúsha, to let his arrival be known, and seated himself in his customary place on the porch. The ensign and his wife had already returned from the vineyard; they came out of the dairy, walked over to their cabin, but did not invite him in.

Maryánka went twice out of the gate. Once, in a half-light, he thought she looked back at him. He eagerly followed every motion of hers, but could not make up his mind to walk up to her. When she had disappeared in the cabin, he descended from the porch, and began to pace the yard. But Maryánka did not come out again.

Olénin passed a sleepless night in the yard, listening to every sound in the ensign's cabin. He heard them talking in the evening, then eating their supper, and taking out the cushions, and lying down to sleep; he heard Maryánka laughing at something, and then he heard how all the noises died down. The ensign said something in a whisper to his wife, and somebody breathed heavily.

He went to his room. Vanyúsha was sleeping, with-

out being undressed. Olénin envied him, and again went out promenading in the yard, all the time waiting for something; but nobody came, nobody stirred; he could hear only the even breathing of three people. He could tell Maryánka's breathing, and he listened to it, and to the thudding of his own heart. Everything was quiet in the village; the late moon had risen, and he could discern the cattle that were panting in the yards, now lying down, and now slowly getting up.

Olénin asked himself, in anger, "What do I want?" and could not tear himself away from the enticement of the night. Suddenly he heard distinct steps, and the creaking of the floor in the ensign's cabin. He rushed to the door; and again nothing was heard but the even breathing; and again, after drawing a deep breath, the buffalo turned around, rose on her fore legs, then got completely up, switched her tail, and something splashed evenly on the dry clay of the yard, and again she lay down, with a groan, in the glamour of the moon —

He asked himself, "What am I to do?" and took his final resolve to go to bed; but some sounds were heard again, and in his imagination rose the image of Maryánka, walking out into the misty moonlit night, and again he rushed to the window, and again steps were heard. Just before daybreak he walked over to the window, pushed the shutter, ran up to the door, and indeed heard Maryánka's deep breath and steps. He took hold of the latch, and knocked. Cautious, bare feet, hardly causing the deals to creak, approached the door. The latch was moved, the door creaked, an odour of wild marjoram and pumpkins was wafted to him, and Maryánka's whole figure appeared on the threshold. He saw her but a moment in the moonlight. She slammed the door, and, saying something under her breath, ran back with light steps. Olénin began lightly to tap on the door, but there was no answer. He ran up to the window

and listened. Suddenly he was struck by a shrill, whining voice.

"Glorious!" said an undersized Cossack in a white lambskin cap, walking close up to Olénin from the yard. "I have seen it all! Glorious!"

Olénin recognized Nazárka and was silent, not knowing what to do, or say.

"Glorious! I will go to the village office to report the matter, and I will tell her father, too. A fine ensign's daughter! She is not satisfied with one."

"What do you want of me? What do you want?" said Olénin.

"Nothing! All I will do is to report at the office."

Nazárka spoke in a very loud voice, evidently on purpose.

"I declare, you are a clever yunker!"

Olénin trembled and was pale.

"Come here, here!"

He clutched his hand, and led him up to his cabin.

"There was nothing. She did not let me in, and I did nothing — She is virtuous —"

"Well, let them settle the matter," said Nazárka.

"I will give you something all the same — Just wait!"

Nazárka was silent. Olénin ran into his cabin, and brought out ten roubles for the Cossack.

"There has been nothing the matter, but I am to blame, nevertheless; so I give you this! Only, for God's sake, tell nobody! Nothing has happened —"

"Farewell," said Nazárka, smiling, and went away.

Nazárka had come that night to the village, by Lukáshka's order, to find a place for a stolen horse, and, on his way home, heard the sound of steps. He returned the next morning to the company, and, boasting, told his chum how cleverly he had procured ten roubles. The next morning Olénin called at the ensign's, and no one knew anything. He did not speak with Maryánka, and she

only smiled, looking at him. He again passed a sleepless night, pacing the yard in vain. The following day he purposely passed in the woods hunting, and in the evening he went to Byelétski's, to run away from himself. He was afraid of himself, and swore he would not call again at the ensign's. The following night Olénin was wakened by the sergeant. The company was to make an incursion at once. Olénin was rejoiced at this incident, and was making up his mind never again to return to the village.

The incursion lasted four days. The chief desired to see Olénin, to whom he was related, and offered him a place on the staff. Olénin declined it. He could not live away from the village, and asked to be sent back. For his work during the campaign he received a soldier's cross, for which he had been hankering before; but now he was quite indifferent to this decoration, and still more indifferent about his advancement to the rank of a regular officer, which was still late in coming. He rode with Vanyúsha down to the line, without meeting with any mishap, and by several hours got the start of his company. Olénin passed the whole evening on the porch, looking at Maryánka. The whole night he again aimlessly and thoughtlessly paced the yard.

XXXIII.

THE next morning Olénin awoke late. The ensign's family was gone. He did not go hunting; he now picked up a book, and now walked out on the porch, and again walked into the room, and lay down on the bed. Vanyúsha thought he was ill. In the evening Olénin arose with a full determination, took up a pen, and wrote until late into the night. He wrote a letter, but did not send it off, because no one would have understood what he wanted to say, nor was there any reason why any one but Olénin should have understood it. This is what he wrote:

"I receive from Russia letters of sympathy; people are afraid that I will perish in the wilderness, where I have buried myself. They say of me: 'He will lose his polish, will fall behind in everything, will take to drinking, and, what is worse, will probably marry a Cossack woman. There was good reason,' they say, 'for Ermolóv to have remarked that he who had served ten years in the Caucasus would either become a confirmed drunkard, or would marry a dissolute woman. How terrible!' Indeed, they are afraid lest I should ruin myself, whereas it might have been my lot to have the great fortune of becoming the husband of Countess B——, a chamberlain, or a marshal of the nobility. How contemptible and pitiable you all appear to me! You do not know what happiness nor what life is! You have first to taste life in all its artless beauty; you must see and understand what I see before me each day: the eternal, inaccessible snows of the moun-

tains, and majestic woman in her pristine beauty, as the first woman must have issued from the hands of her Creator, — and then it will be clear who it is that is being ruined, and who lives according to the truth, you or I.

"If you only knew how detestable and pitiable you are to me in your delusions! The moment there rise before me, instead of my cabin, my forest, and my love, those drawing-rooms, those women with pomaded hair, through which the false locks appear, those unnaturally lisping lips, those concealed and distorted limbs, and that prattle of the drawing-rooms, which pretends to be conversation, but has no right to be called so, — an insufferable feeling of disgust comes over me. I see before me those dull faces, those rich, marriageable girls, with an expression on the face which says, 'That's all right, you may — Just come up to me, even though I am a rich, marriageable girl;' that sitting down and changing of places; that impudent pairing of people, and that never ending gossip and hypocrisy; those rules — to this one your hand, to that one a nod, and with that one a chat; and finally, that eternal ennui in the blood, which passes from generation to generation (and consciously at that, with the conviction of its necessity). You must understand, or believe it. You must see and grasp what truth and beauty are, and everything which you say and think, all your wishes for your own happiness and for mine, will be dispersed to the winds. Happiness consists in being with Nature, in seeing it, and holding converse with it. 'The Lord preserve him, but he will, no doubt, marry a Cossack woman, and will be entirely lost to society,' I imagine them saying about me, with genuine compassion, whereas it is precisely this that I wish: to be entirely lost, in your sense of the word, and to marry a simple Cossack woman; I dare not do it, because that would be the acme of happiness, of which I am unworthy.

"Three months have passed since I for the first time saw the Cossack maiden, Maryánka. The conceptions and prejudices of the society from which I had issued were still fresh in me. I did not believe then that I could fall in love with this woman. I admired her, as I admired the beauty of the mountains and of the sky, nor could I help admiring her, for she is as beautiful as they. Then I felt that the contemplation of this beauty had become a necessity of my life, and I began to ask myself whether I did not love her; but I did not find in myself anything resembling the feeling as I had imagined it to be. This sentiment resembled neither the longing for solitude, nor the desire for matrimony, nor platonic love, still less carnal love, which I had experienced. I had to see and hear her, to know that she was near, and I was not exactly happy, but calm. After an evening party, which I had attended with her, and at which I had touched her, I felt that between that woman and myself existed an indissoluble, though unacknowledged, bond, against which it would be vain to struggle. But I did struggle. I said to myself: 'Is it possible for me to love a woman who will never comprehend the spiritual interests of my life? Can I love a woman for her mere beauty, can I love a statue of a woman?' I asked myself, and I was loving her all the time, though I did not trust my own sentiment.

"After the party, when I had spoken to her for the first time, our relations were changed, Before that time she was to me a foreign, but majestic, object of external Nature; after the party, she became a human being for me. I have met her and spoken with her; and I have been with her father at work, and have passed whole evenings in their company. And in these close relations she has remained, to my thinking, just as pure, inaccessible, and majestic. To all questions she has always answered in the same calm, proud, and gaily indifferent

manner. At times she has been gracious, but for the most part every glance, every word, every motion of hers, has expressed the same, not contemptuous, but repressive and enticing indifference.

"Each day I tried, with a feigning smile on my lips, to dissemble, and, with the torment of passion and of desires in my heart, I spoke jestingly to her. But she saw that I was dissembling, and yet looked gaily and simply at me. This situation grew intolerable to me. I did not wish to lie before her, and wanted to tell her everything I thought and everything I felt. I was very much excited; that was in the vineyard. I began to tell her of my love, in words that I am ashamed to recall. I am ashamed to think of them, because I ought never to have dared to tell her that, and because she stood immeasurably above the words and above the feeling which I had intended to express to her. I grew silent, and since that day my situation has been insufferable. I did not wish to lower myself, by persisting in the former jocular relations, and I was conscious that I was not yet ripe for straightforward, simple relations with her. I asked myself in despair, 'What shall I do?'

"In my preposterous dreams I imagined her, now as my mistress, and now as my wife, and I repelled both thoughts in disgust. It would be terrible to make a mistress of her. It would be a murder. And it would be still worse to make a lady of her, the wife of Dmítri Andréevich Olénin, as one of our officers has made a lady of a Cossack girl of this place, whom he has married. If I could turn Cossack, become a Lukáshka, steal herds of horses, fill myself with red wine, troll songs, kill people, and when drunk climb through the window to pass the night with her, without asking myself who I am and why I am, — it would be a different matter; then we could understand each other, and I might be happy.

"I tried to abandon myself to such a life, but it made

me only feel more strongly my weakness, my contorted existence. I could not forget myself and my composite, inharmonious, monstrous past. And my future presents itself to me still more disconsolately. Each day the distant snow-capped mountains and that majestic, happy woman are before me. But not for me is the only possible happiness in the world; not for me is this woman!

"Most terrible and sweetest to me, in my situation, was the consciousness that I understood her, while she would never understand me. She will not understand me, not because she stands below me, but she never ought to understand me. She is happy; she is like Nature, — even, calm, and herself. But I, weak, contorted creature, want her to understand my unnaturalness and my suffering.

"I have passed sleepless nights, and aimlessly stood under her windows, without giving myself an account of what was going on within me. On the 18th, our company was called out to make an incursion. I passed three days outside the village. I was melancholy, and nothing interested me. The songs, the card-playing, the drinking bouts, the conversations about rewards in the detachment, were more loathsome to me than ever. I returned home to-day; I saw her, my cabin, Uncle Eróshka, and the snow-capped mountains from my porch, and I was seized by such a strong and novel feeling of joy, that I understood everything. I love that woman with a real love; I love for the first and only time in my life. I know what the matter with me is. I am not afraid to lower myself through my sentiment, am not ashamed of my love, but proud of it.

"It is not my fault that I have fallen in love. It happened against my will. I took refuge from my love in self-renunciation; I made myself believe that I took delight in the love of the Cossack Lukáshka for Maryánka, and I only fanned my love and my jealousy. This is not

an ideal, a so-called exalted love, which I had experienced heretofore; not that feeling of transport, when a person contemplates his love, feels within him the source of his sentiment, and does everything himself. I have experienced that also. This is even less a desire for enjoyment, — it is something else. Maybe in her I love Nature, the personification of everything beautiful in Nature; but I have not my own will, and through me an elementary force loves her, and the whole world, all Nature, impresses this love upon my soul, and says to me, 'Love!' I love her not with my mind, not with my imagination, but with my whole being. Loving her, I feel myself an inseparable part of the whole blissful world of the Lord.

"I have written you before about my new convictions, which I had carried away from my solitary life; but nobody can know with what labour they were worked out within me, with what delight I hailed them, and how happy I was to see the new path of life open to me. There was nothing more precious to me than these convictions — Well — love came, and they are gone, and not even the regrets for them are left! It is even difficult for me to grasp how I could have been carried away by such a cold, one-sided, mental mood. Beauty came, and all the monumental labour of the mind is scattered to the winds. I have not even any regrets for what has passed away!

"Self-renunciation is nonsense, wild rambling. It is nothing but pride, a refuge from a well-deserved misfortune, a salvation from envying another's happiness. To live for others, to do good! Wherefore? When my soul is filled with the one love of myself, and with the one desire to love her, and live with her, to live her life. I now wish happiness, not for others, not for Lukáshka. Now I do not love these others. Formerly I should have said that this is bad. I should have tormented myself

with the questions, 'What will become of her, of me, of Lukáshka?' Now it is all the same to me. I live not in myself, but there is something stronger than myself that guides me. I suffer; but formerly I was dead, and now only I live. I will call on them to-day, and will tell her everything."

XXXIV.

HAVING finished the letter, Olénin went late in the evening to the ensign's cabin. The old woman was sitting on a bench behind the oven, unravelling cocoons. Maryánka, with bared head, was sewing by candle-light. When she saw Olénin, she sprang up, took her kerchief, and went up to the oven.

"Stay with us, Maryánushka," said her mother.

"No, I am bareheaded." And she leaped upon the oven.

Olénin saw only her knees and her shapely legs that were hanging down. He treated the old woman to tea, and she treated her guest to boiled cream, for which she sent Maryánka. Having placed the plate on the table, Maryánka again leaped upon the oven, and Olénin was conscious only of her glance. They were speaking of house matters. Mother Ulítka unbosomed herself, and was in a mood of hospitality. She brought Olénin grape preserves, grape cake, and the best wine, and she began to treat him with that peculiar, plebeian, coarse, and proud hospitality which is found only among people who earn their bread by physical labour. The old woman, who at first had impressed Olénin with her coarseness, now frequently touched him by her simple tenderness in relation to her daughter.

"We need not complain, dear sir! We have everything, thank God! We have pressed some wine, and have preserved some, and we shall be able to sell three

barrels or more of grapes, and there will be enough left to drink. Don't be in a hurry to leave us! We will have you celebrate with us at the wedding."

"When will the wedding be?" asked Olénin, feeling all his blood rush to his face, and his heart beating with an uneven and painful motion.

There was a stir behind the oven, and the cracking of pumpkin seeds was heard.

"Well, we ought to celebrate it next week. We are ready," replied the old woman, in a quiet, straightforward manner, as though Olénin were not there, or had never existed. "I have got everything together for Maryánushka. We will give her a nice trousseau. Only this is bad: our Lukáshka has been a little wild of late. He is carrying on too much! He is wild! The other day a Cossack returned from the company, and told us that Lukáshka had been to the Nogáy country."

"He might get caught," said Olénin.

"That's what I say: 'You, Lukáshka, don't be so wild!' Of course, he is a young fellow, and he wants to show off. But there is a time for everything. Well, suppose he has driven off some cattle, has stolen, has killed an abrék,—a fine fellow! It is time to live a peaceable life; but this will not do."

"Yes, I saw him once or twice at the front,—he is taking it easy. And then he has sold his horse," said Olénin, glancing at the oven.

A pair of large black eyes gleamed at him sternly and malevolently. He was sorry for what he had said.

"Well! He is doing no one any harm," suddenly said Maryánka. "He is celebrating with his own money," and letting down her feet, she leaped from the oven and went out, slamming the door.

Olénin followed her out with his eyes; then he looked out into the yard, and waited, not listening to what Mother Ulítka was telling him. A few minutes later

guests entered: an old man, Mother Ulítka's brother, Uncle Eróshka, and soon after, Maryánka, with Ústenka.

"Good evening," Ústenka squeaked. "Are you still celebrating?" she said, turning to Olénin.

"Yes, I am," he answered, and for some reason he felt ashamed and ill at ease.

He wanted to go away, and could not. Equally, it seemed impossible to him to keep silent. The old man helped him out: he asked for something to drink, and they drank together. Then Olénin had some wine with Eróshka. Then with the other Cossack. Then again with Eróshka. And the more he drank, the heavier his heart felt. The old men drank without cessation. The two girls climbed on the oven, where they giggled, looking at the men, who drank until late into the night. Olénin did not speak, but drank more than the rest. The Cossacks were getting noisy. The old woman told them to go, and refused to give them more wine. The girls made fun of Uncle Eróshka; it was ten o'clock when they all went out on the porch. The old men invited themselves to end the night in a drinking bout at Olénin's. Ústenka ran away home. Eróshka took the Cossack over to Vanyúsha. The old woman went to straighten out things in the dairy. Maryánka was left alone in the room. Olénin felt fresh and brisk, as though he had just awakened. He took in the situation, and, letting the old men go ahead, returned to the room. Maryánka was getting ready to go to sleep. He went up to her, and wished to say something to her, but his voice broke. She sat down on her bed, drew her feet under her, moved away from him into the corner, and looked at him in silence, with a terrified, wild glance. She was evidently afraid of him. Olénin felt it. He was both sorry and ashamed, but, at the same time, felt a proud pleasure for having evoked in her this feeling, if no other.

"Maryánka!" he said. "Will you never have pity on me? I can't tell you how I love you."

She moved away still farther.

"It is the wine that is speaking in you. You will get nothing!"

"No, not the wine. Do not marry Lukáshka! I will marry you."

"What am I saying?" he thought, as he pronounced those words. "Will I tell her this to-morrow? I will, I certainly will, and I will repeat it now," an inner voice answered him.

"Will you marry me?"

She looked at him earnestly, and her fear seemed to have left her.

"Maryánka! I shall lose my reason. I am beside myself. I will do whatever you tell me to," and senselessly tender words flowed of their own accord.

"Don't talk such rubbish!" she interrupted him, suddenly seizing his hand which he had stretched out to her. She did not push it away, but gripped it tightly between her strong, rough fingers. "Do gentlemen marry Cossack girls? Go!"

"Will you marry me? I will —"

"And what shall we do with Lukáshka?" she said, smiling.

He tore his hand, which she was holding, out of hers, and firmly clasped her youthful body. But she jumped up like a deer, leaped down with her bare feet, and ran out on the porch. Olénin came to his senses, and was horror-struck at himself. Again he appeared to himself inexpressibly detestable in comparison with her. But, without repenting for a moment what he had said, he went home, and, without paying any attention to the carousing old men, lay down, and slept a sound sleep, such as he had not slept for a long time.

XXXV.

THE next day was a holiday. In the evening all the people were in the street displaying their gala attire in the setting sun. More wine than usual had been pressed. The people were through with the harvest. The Cossacks were preparing themselves to leave for an expedition within a month, and many families were getting ready to celebrate weddings.

In the square, in front of the village office, and near two shops, in one of which sweetmeats and pumpkin and melon seeds were sold, and in the other kerchiefs and calico, stood the largest groups. On the mound of the village office stood and sat old men, in simple gray and black coats, without galloons and adornments. The old men were discussing, in quiet, measured voices, the crops and the young children, the village affairs and the olden times, sternly and indifferently looking down upon the younger generation. The women and girls, passing by them, stopped for a moment and lowered their heads. The young Cossacks deferentially shortened their steps, and, doffing their caps, held them for awhile before their heads. The old men grew silent. They surveyed the passers-by, now sternly, now kindly, and deliberately took off their caps and put them on again.

The Cossack women had not yet begun to lead the *khorovód*, but, gathering in groups, in their brightly coloured half-coats and white kerchiefs, which covered their heads down to the eyes, sat on the ground and on the mounds, in the shade formed by the slanting rays, and

chattered and laughed with their ringing voices. The boys and girls played ball, whirling it high up into the air, and, shouting and piping, ran about the square. The half-grown girls at the other end of the square were already leading the *khorovód*, and singing a song in their shrill, timid voices. The scribes, the exempt from service, and the young lads who had come home for the holidays, in white gala mantles and in new red ones embroidered with galloons, with merry holiday faces, walked hand in hand, in groups of two and three, from one circle of women and girls to another, and, stopping, jested and played with the Cossack maidens.

An Armenian shopkeeper, in a blue mantle of fine cloth with galloons, was standing at the open door, through which could be seen shelves with rolled up coloured kerchiefs, and, with the pride of an Eastern merchant and the consciousness of his importance, was waiting for customers. Two red-bearded, barefooted Chechéns, who had come from across the Térek to enjoy the holiday, were sitting on their heels near the house of their acquaintance, and, carelessly smoking their little pipes and continually spitting out, were exchanging rapid guttural sounds, as they were watching the people. Now and then a soldier in an old week-day overcoat hurriedly passed between the variegated groups of the square. Here and there were heard the drunken songs of Cossacks going on a spree.

All the cabins were closed up, and the porches had been washed the evening before. Even the old women were in the streets. Along the roads shells of melon and pumpkin seeds were lying everywhere in the dust. The air was warm and motionless, the clear sky was blue and transparent. The dull white crests of the mountains which could be seen behind the roofs looked as though within a short distance, and as though they were tinged pink by the rays of the declining sun. Occasionally, the distant din of a cannon could be heard from across the river.

But over the village were borne the varied gay holiday sounds, mingling into one.

Olénin had been pacing the yard all the morning, in the hope of seeing Maryánka. But she had gone to mass in the chapel soon after having dressed herself; then she sat on a mound with the girls, cracking seeds, or with her companions ran into the house, casting merry and kind glances upon the lodger. Olénin was afraid to speak jestingly to her, especially before others. He was waiting for another such moment as on the previous evening; but that moment did not present itself, and he felt it to be above his strength to remain any longer in that uncertain situation. She again came out into the street, and a little while later he himself followed her, not knowing whither. He passed by the corner where she was seated, gleaming in her blue velvet half-coat, and with pain in his heart he heard the girls' laughter behind him.

Byelétski's cabin was near the square. As he went past it, he heard Byelétski's voice, "Come in!" and he walked in.

After a short chat, they sat down at the window. Soon after they were joined by Eróshka in a new half-coat, who sat down on the floor near them.

"That over yonder is an aristocratic group," said Byelétski, pointing with his cigarette to a variegated crowd on the corner, and smiling. "Mine is there, too, in a new red dress, you see. Why don't the *khorovóds* begin?" exclaimed Byelétski, looking out of the window. "Just wait! As soon as it is dark, we will go out ourselves. Then we will call them to Ústenka's. We must give them a party."

"I will come to Ústenka's, too," said Olénin, resolutely. "Will Maryánka be there?"

"She will. Do come!" said Byelétski, not in the least surprised. "Now, this is really very beautiful," he added, pointing to the variegated crowds.

"Yes, very!" Olénin agreed with him, endeavouring to appear indifferent. "On such holidays," he added, "I am always wondering what it is that makes the people suddenly content and gay, simply because there happens to be such and such a date. The holiday is on everything. Their eyes, and faces, and voices, and motions, and clothes, and the air and sun, — everything has a holiday appearance. We are past our holidays."

"Yes," said Byelétski, who was not fond of such reflections.

"Well, why don't you drink, old man?" he turned to Eróshka.

Eróshka winked to Olénin, as much as to say, "Yes, your chum is a proud fellow!"

Byelétski raised his glass.

"*Allah birdy*," he said, and emptied it. (*Allah birdy* means "God has given!" It is a customary salutation of the mountaineers when they drink together.)

"*Sau bul* (May you be well)," said Eróshka, smiling, and gulping down his glass.

"You say it is a holiday!" he said to Olénin, rising and looking through the window. "This is not much of a holiday! You ought to have seen them celebrate in days gone by! The women used to come out all dressed up in sleeveless cloaks embroidered with galloons. The breast would be festooned with gold lace in two rows. On their heads they wore gold-laced hats. As they walked past, they raised such a noise! Each woman was a princess. They used to go out, a whole bevy of them, and sing songs enough to deafen you; they would celebrate all night long. And the Cossacks would roll out kegs into the yards, and sit down and drink until daybreak; or they would take each other's hands and start on a rush through the village. Whomsoever they met on their way, they would take with them, and so they would go from house to house. Many a time they would celebrate three

days in succession. I remember how father used to come home, red and puffed up, without his cap or anything, and throw himself down on the bed. Mother knew what to do: she would bring him some fresh caviar and red wine to sober him up with, and herself would run through the village to look for his cap. Then he would sleep for two days at a time! That is the kind of people they were then! But how is it to-day?"

"Well, how about the girls in their sleeveless cloaks? Did they keep by themselves?" asked Byelétski.

"Yes, by themselves! Then the Cossacks would come, on foot or on horseback, and 'Let us break up their *khorovóds!*' they would say, and the girls would take up oak cudgels. In the Butter-week a young fellow would come dashing along in such a manner, and they would strike out, and beat his horse, and him. But he would break through the wall, and carry off the one he liked best. And his sweetheart would love him to his heart's content. Oh, what girls, what queenly girls they were!"

XXXVI.

JUST then two men on horseback rode up from a side street. One of them was Nazárka, the other Lukáshka. Lukáshka was sitting a little to one side on his well-fed bay Kabardá horse, which stepped lightly on the rough road, and swayed his beautiful head with his shining, delicate withers. The well-adjusted gun in the case, the pistol at his back, and the military mantle rolled up behind the saddle, proved that Lukáshka had not arrived from a peaceful, or near-by place. In his sidewise foppish pose, in the careless motion of his hand, with which he almost inaudibly cracked his whip under the horse's belly, and particularly in his glistening black eyes, with which he, proudly blinking, surveyed everything about him, were expressed the consciousness of strength and the self-confidence of youth. "Have you seen the dashing fellow?" his eyes, glancing around him, seemed to say. His shapely horse, the harness and the weapons with silver trimmings, and the handsome Cossack himself, attracted the attention of all the people who were gathered in the square. Nazárka, spare and undersized, was dressed much worse than Lukáshka. Passing by the old men, Lukáshka checked his horse, and raised his white curly cap above his clipped black hair.

"Well, have you driven off many Nogáy horses?" said a haggard old man, with a frowning, gloomy look.

"Have you been counting them, grandfather, that you are asking about it?" replied Lukáshka, turning away.

"You are not doing well to take the chap with you," said the old man, more gloomily still.

"See, the devil, he knows everything!" Lukáshka said, under his breath, and his face assumed a careworn expression; but glancing into the corner where a number of Cossack girls were standing, he wheeled his horse around toward them.

"Good day, girls!" he shouted, in his strong, ringing voice, and suddenly checked in his horse. "You have grown old without me, hags!" and he burst out laughing.

"Good day, Lukáshka, good day, brother!" were heard their merry voices. "Have you brought much money with you? Buy the girls some sweetmeats! How long are you going to stay? We have not seen you for a long time."

"Nazárka and I have run down for the night, to celebrate," answered Lukáshka, cracking his whip over the horse, and riding into the throng of girls.

"Why, Maryánka has entirely forgotten about you," shrieked Ústenka, nudging Maryánka with her elbow, and bursting forth into a small laugh.

Maryánka moved back from the horse, and, thrusting back her head, calmly gazed at the Cossack with her large sparkling eyes.

"You have not been here for a long time! Stop crushing us with your horse!" she said, dryly, and turned away.

Lukáshka was evidently in a very happy frame of mind. His face shone with daring and joy. Maryánka's cold answer obviously startled him. He suddenly scowled.

"Get up on the stirrups, and I will take you into the mountains, my dear!" he suddenly cried, as though to dispel his unpleasant thoughts, and began to make all kinds of daring evolutions among the girls. He bent down to Maryánka. "I will kiss you, I will kiss you hard!"

Maryánka's eyes and his met, and she suddenly blushed. She stepped aside.

"Stop it! You are going to crush our feet!" she said, and, lowering her head, looked at her shapely feet that were clad in blue stockings with clocks, and in new red shoes, bordered with narrow silver galloons.

Lukáshka turned to Ústenka, and Maryánka sat down alongside a Cossack woman holding a babe in her arms. The child stretched its hands out toward Maryánka, and with its plump little hand seized a thread of the necklace which was hanging down her blue half-coat. Maryánka bent down to the child, and looked askance at Lukáshka. In the meantime Lukáshka fetched out from the pocket of his black half-coat, beneath his mantle, a small bundle of sweetmeats and seeds.

"I offer it to the whole crowd," he said, handing the bundle to Ústenka, and smilingly gazing at Maryánka.

There was again an expression of perplexity in the girl's face. Her beautiful eyes looked dim, as though covered with a mist. She lowered the kerchief below her lips, and, suddenly burying her head in the white face of the babe holding her necklace, began to kiss it eagerly. The child pressed its tiny hands against the girl's swelling bosom and cried, opening its toothless mouth.

"You are choking the baby," said the child's mother, taking it away and opening her half-coat, in order to give it the breast. "You had better chat with the young lad."

"As soon as I have housed the horse, I will be back with Nazárka, to carouse all night," said Lukáshka, striking the horse with the whip, and riding away from the girls.

Having turned, together with Nazárka, into a side street, they rode up to two cabins standing in a row.

"So here we are, brother! Come soon!" Lukáshka cried to his companion, dismounting at the neighbouring

yard, and leading his own horse through the wicker gate of his own courtyard. "Good evening, Stépka!" he turned to the dumb girl, who herself was dressed in holiday attire, and was coming in from the street to take the horse from him. He made signs to her to give the horse some hay, and not to unsaddle him.

The dumb girl made some inarticulate sounds, smacked her lips, pointed to the horse, and kissed his nose. That meant that she liked the horse, and that it was a fine steed.

"Good evening, mother! Have you not yet been out in the street?" cried Lukáshka, holding his gun and walking up the steps.

His old mother opened the door for him.

"Now, I did not expect you, nor hope for you to come," said the old woman. "Kírka told me you would not be here."

"Let me have a little red wine, mother! Nazárka will come to see me, and we will drink in honour of the holiday."

"Directly, Lukáshka, directly," answered the old woman. "Our women-folk are out strolling. I think our dumb girl has gone out, too."

She picked up her keys and hastened out into the dairy.

Having stabled his horse and taken off his gun, Nazárka went over to Lukáshka's.

XXXVII.

"To your health," said Lukáshka, receiving from his mother a full cup of wine, and cautiously taking it over to Nazárka, who sat with drooping head.

"I declare," said Nazárka, "you heard Grandfather Clodhopper ask, 'Have you stolen many horses?' He evidently knows."

"Wizard!" was Lukáshka's curt reply. "What of it?" he added, shaking his head. "They are now beyond the river. Go and find them!"

"Still it is not good."

"What is not good? Take some wine to him to-morrow! That's what we have to do, and that will be the end of it. Now for the spree! Drink!" shouted Lukáshka, in the same voice in which old Eróshka pronounced this word. "We will go out to celebrate in the street, with the girls. You go down and fetch some honey, or I will send the dumb girl for it. We will celebrate until morning."

Nazárka smiled.

"Well, shall we stay here long?" he asked.

"Let us first have a good time! Run for some brandy! Here is money!"

Nazárka obediently ran over to Yámka's.

Uncle Eróshka and Ergushóv, having scented a spree, like some birds of prey, fell, both drunk, one after the other, into the hut.

"Let me have another half-bucket!" shouted Lukáshka to his mother, in reply to their salutation.

"Now, tell me, you devil, where did you steal?" shouted Uncle Eróshka. "You are a fine fellow! I love you!"

"Yes, you love me," answered Lukáshka, laughing. "You are carrying sweetmeats from yunkers to girls. What do you say, old man?"

"It is a lie, yes, it is a lie! Oh, Márka!" The old man burst out laughing. "How that devil did beg me! 'Go,' says he, 'and try for me!' He offered me a fowling-piece. No, God be with him! I would have done it, but I was sorry for you. Now, tell me, where have you been?" And the old man started speaking in Tartar.

Lukáshka answered him briskly.

Ergushóv, who did not understand Tartar well, now and then threw in a few words in Russian.

"I say, he has driven off some horses. I know for sure," he affirmed.

"Giréyka and I rode out together," Lukáshka began to tell. His using the diminutive Giréyka for Giréy-khan heightened his dash to the Cossack's thinking. "On the other side of the river he boasted of knowing the whole steppe, and he said he would take me there straight; but when we rode out it was dark night, and my Giréyka got all mixed up; he began to sniff about, and could not make out anything. He could not find the native village, and that was the end of it. We had obviously gone too much to the right. I suppose we must have wandered about until midnight. And then luckily the dogs began to howl."

"Fools," said Uncle Eróshka. "We used to get lost that way in the steppe. The devil can make them out! Then I would ride on some mound, and howl like a wolf, like this!" He folded his hands over his mouth, and howled like a pack of wolves, in one long note. "The dogs would always reply. Go, tell the rest! Well, did you find it?"

"We at once took to putting the halters on the horses. Nogáy women caught Nazárka, bah!"

"Yes, they did," said Nazárka, who had just returned; he spoke as though he were offended.

"We rode ahead, and again Giréyka lost his way; he took us straight to the sand dunes. He kept saying that we were riding in the direction of the Térek, when we were going quite the opposite way."

"You ought to have watched the stars," said Uncle Eróshka.

"That's what I say," Ergushóv chimed in.

"But, I tell you it was dreadfully dark. I groped about and about! I put the halter on one mare, and gave my own horse the rein. I thought he would take me the right way. What do you think he did? He just snorted, and put his nose to the ground. He dashed forward, and brought me straight to the village. And in the meantime it had grown light; we had barely time to hide them in the woods. Nagím came from across the river, and took them away."

Ergushóv shook his head. "That's what I say: it was clever. How many did you get?"

"They are all here," said Lukáshka, striking his pocket with his hand.

Just then the old woman entered the room.

"Drink!" he shouted.

"Once Girchík and I went out late —" began Eróshka.

"Well, there will be no end to your story," said Lukáshka. "But I will go." Emptying his wine-bowl and tightening his belt, Lukáshka went out into the street.

XXXVIII.

It was late when Lukáshka walked out into the street. The autumnal night was fresh and windless. The full golden moon swam out from behind the black poplars that towered on one side of the square. A smoke rose from the chimneys of the dairies, and, mingling with the mist, spread over the village. Here and there a light could be seen in the windows. The odour of the dung chips, of the young wine, and of the mist was borne through the air. The chatting, the laughter, the songs, and the cracking of seeds sounded just as mixed, but more distinct than in the daytime. White kerchiefs and lambskin caps could be seen in small groups in the darkness, along the fences and the houses.

In the square, opposite the opened and illuminated door of the shop, were assembled throngs of Cossacks and girls, looking now black, now white, and there could be heard loud songs, laughter, and chattering. Taking hold of each other's hands, the girls were circling around, tripping gracefully in the dusty square. A haggard and very homely girl sang out:

"Out of the forest, the little dark forest,
Ay da lyuli!
Out of the garden, the little green garden,
There walked out, came out two fine fellows,
Two fine fellows, and both of them unmarried.
They walked out, came out, and stood still,
They stood still, began to quarrel.
Forth came to them a fair maiden,
Came out to them, and spoke to them:

'Now, to one of you I shall be given.'
She was given to the fair-faced lad,
The fair-faced lad, the fair-haired one.
He took her, took her by her right hand,
He led her, led her, all around the circle,
And he boasted to all his companions:
'Behold, brothers, the wife I have!'"

The old women stood around and listened to the songs. The boys and young girls flitted about in the darkness, trying to catch each other. The Cossacks stood near by, teasing the girls as they passed, and occasionally breaking through the *khorovód*, and walking inside the circle. On the dark side of the door stood Byelétski and Olénin, in mantles and lambskin caps, and conversed with each other, not in the Cossack dialect, nor aloud, but audibly enough, and they were conscious of attracting attention. Plump Ústenka, in red half-coat, and the majestic figure of Maryánka, in her new shirt and half-coat, were neighbours in the *khorovód*. Olénin was discussing with Byelétski how to get Maryánka and Ústenka away from the *khorovód*. Byelétski surmised that Olénin wanted to have some amusement, but Olénin was hoping to have his lot decided. He wanted to see Maryánka by herself that evening, cost what it might, to tell her everything, and to ask her whether she could and would become his wife. Although the question had long ago been answered in the negative, he hoped that he would be able to tell her everything he felt, and that she would understand him.

"Why did you not tell me before?" said Byelétski. "I would have arranged it for you through Ústenka. You are so strange!"

"What's to be done? Some day, very soon, I will tell you everything. But now, for God's sake, arrange it so that she will come to Ústenka's."

"Very well. That is easy. So the fair-faced lad will get you, and not Lukáshka?" said Byelétski, for propri-

ety's sake turning first to Maryánka; but, without waiting for an answer, he went up to Ústenka, and began to ask her to bring Maryánka with her. He had hardly finished speaking, when the leader started another song, and the girls drew each other around the circle.

They sang:

"Behind the garden, behind the garden,
A fellow, her to meet,
Walked up and down the street.
The first time he walked,
His right hand did he flap;
The second time he walked,
He waved his beaver cap;
But the third time he walked,
He stopped in front of her,
Stopped in front of her, went over to her.
'I was going to see thee,
Angrily to thee to talk:
Why didst thou not, dear maid,
Come in the garden for to walk?
Or art thou, my darling maid,
Much too proud for me?
Afterward, my darling maid,
Will I settle thee.
I will send the wooers to thee,
I will sue for thee:
You will surely be my wife,
And will weep through me.'

"Though I knew what to say,
I did not dare to answer 'Nay!'
I did not dare to answer 'Nay!'
To the garden I did wend,
And saluted there my friend.
'Here this kerchief take from me!
'Tis a gift, my dear, for thee.
Into thy white hands 'tis laid, —
Take it from me, darling maid!
Into thy white hands, my dove, —
Give, oh, give me, dear, thy love!
Maid, I have not, as I live,
Other gifts to thee to give.

I shall give my sweetheart dear
Nothing but this kerchief here.
Take this kerchief, do take this, —
And my dear five times I'll kiss!'"

Lukáshka and Nazárka broke the *khorovód*, and walked in among the girls. Lukáshka accompanied the song with his shrill voice, and, waving his hands, walked around inside the circle. "Let one of you come out!" he said. The girls pushed Maryánka; but she would not go. Amidst the song could be heard a shrill laughter, blows, kisses, and whispers.

Passing by Olénin, Lukáshka graciously nodded his head to him.

"Dmítri Andréevich, did you come here to look at it?" he said.

"Yes," Olénin answered, resolutely and dryly.

Byelétski leaned down to Ústenka's ear, and said something to her. She wanted to reply, but did not get a chance; when she circled around the second time, she said:

"All right, we will come!"

"And Maryánka, too?"

Olénin bent down to Maryánka. "Will you come? Please do, if only for a minute. I want to talk with you."

"If the girls will go, I will."

"Will you tell me what I asked you about?" he asked, leaning over to her. "You are happy to-day."

She began to whirl around. He followed her.

"Will you tell me?"

"What?"

"What I asked you about two days ago," said Olénin, bending down to her ear. "Will you marry me?"

"I will tell you," she answered. "I will tell you this evening."

In the darkness her eyes flashed gaily and kindly at the young man.

He continued to walk with her. It was a pleasure for him to bend closer to her.

But Lukáshka, proceeding with his song, gave her hand a mighty jerk, and pulled her out into the middle of the *khorovód*. Olénin had just time to say, "Do come down to Ústenka's!" after which he walked back to his companion. The song was ended. Lukáshka wiped his lips, Maryánka did the same, and they kissed. "No, *five kisses*," said Lukáshka. Conversation, laughter, running, took the place of the even motion and the even sounds. Lukáshka, who seemed to have had a goodly portion of wine, began to distribute sweetmeats to the girls.

"I offer it to all," he said, with proud, tragicomical self-satisfaction. "And she who will pass her time with soldiers, let her get out of the *khorovód*," he suddenly added, looking maliciously at Olénin.

The girls grabbed his sweetmeats, and, laughing, took them away from each other. Byelétski and Olénin walked over to one side.

Lukáshka, as though embarrassed at his liberality, took off his cap and, wiping his brow with his sleeve, walked over to Maryánka and Ústenka.

"*Or art thou, my darling maid, much too proud for me?*" he repeated the words of the song which had just been sung, and, turning to Maryánka, "*Much too proud for me*," he repeated, angrily, once more. "*You will surely be my wife, and will weep through me*," he added, embracing Ústenka and Maryánka at once.

Ústenka tore herself loose, and, raising her hand, struck him such a blow on his back that it made her hand smart.

"Well, are you going to lead again?" he asked.

"As the girls wish," answered Ústenka, "but I am going home, and Maryánka wanted to come to our house, too."

"Don't go there, Maryánka!" he said. "We will pass our time together for the last time. Go home, and I will follow you."

"What should I do at home? This is what the holiday is for, to have a good time. I am going to Ústenka's," said Maryánka.

"I am going to marry you soon."

"Very well," said Maryánka. "We will see then."

"Well, will you go?" said Lukáshka, sternly, giving her a tight hug, and kissing her cheek.

"Stop! Don't bother me!" And Maryánka tore herself loose and walked away from him.

"Oh, girl, it will not be right," reproachfully said Lukáshka, stopping and shaking his head. "*You will weep through me*," and, turning away from her, he shouted to the girls, "Sing a song, won't you?"

Maryánka seemed to be frightened and annoyed by what he had said. She stopped. "What will not be right?"

"That."

"What?"

"Your keeping company with the soldier, your lodger, and because you are not loving me any more."

"If I don't want to love you, I won't. You are not my father or mother. What do you want? I will love whom I please."

"Well, well!" said Lukáshka. "Only remember it!" He went up to the shop. "Girls!" he cried. "Why are you standing there? Sing another *khorovód*. Nazárka, go and fetch us some wine."

"Well, will they come?" Olénin asked Byelétski.

"They will, directly," answered Byelétski. "Come, we must get the entertainment ready."

XXXIX.

It was late in the night when Olénin left Byelétski's cabin, following directly after Maryánka and Ústenka. The girl's white kerchief could be discerned in the dark street. The golden moon was descending toward the steppe. A silvery mist hovered over the village. All was quiet; there were no lights; only the steps of the departing women could be heard. Olénin's heart beat strongly. His flushed face was refreshed in the damp air. He glanced at the sky, and at the cabin from which he had come; the light in it went out, and again he watched the retiring shadow of the women. The white kerchief disappeared in the mist. He felt terribly to be alone; he was so happy! He sprang down from the porch and ran after the girls.

"Come now! They might see you!" said Ústenka.

"That's all right!"

Olénin rushed up to Maryánka and embraced her.

Maryánka did not struggle.

"Have you not kissed her enough?" said Ústenka. "You will kiss her when you get married, but now you must wait."

"Good-bye, Maryánka! To-morrow I will call on your father, and will tell him myself. Don't say anything to him!"

"What should I say, anyway?" answered Maryánka.

The two girls started to run. Olénin walked by himself, trying to recall everything that had taken place. He had passed the whole evening all alone with her, behind

the oven. Ústenka did not leave the room for a minute, and passed her time with the girls and with Byelétski. Olénin had been talking with her in a whisper.

"Will you marry me?" he had asked her.

"You will deceive me! You will not take me," she had replied, gaily and calmly.

"But do you love me? Tell me, for God's sake!"

"Why should I not love you? You are not misshapen!" Maryánka had answered, laughing, and pressing his hand in her own rough hands. "What white, awfully white, hands you have, — just like curds," she had said.

"I am not jesting. Tell me, will you marry me?"

"Why should I not, if father is willing?"

"Remember, I shall lose my mind if you deceive me. To-morrow I will tell your parents; I will come to sue for you."

Maryánka had suddenly burst out laughing.

"What is the matter with you?"

"Nothing. It is so funny."

"Truly! I will buy a vineyard and a house, and will enrol myself as a Cossack —"

"Look out! You must not love any other women! I am cross when it comes to that —"

Olénin with delight repeated all these words in his imagination. At these recollections he now felt an anguish and now was breathless with happiness. He was depressed, because she had been as calm as ever while speaking with him. This new situation had, apparently, not agitated her in the least. She did not seem to believe him, and was not thinking of the future. It appeared to him that she was loving him only in the present, and that there was no future for her with him. But he was happy, because her words seemed to him to be the truth, and because she had consented to be his.

"Yes," he said to himself, "only then shall we understand each other when she is all mine. For such a love

there are no words, but life, a whole life, is needed. To-morrow everything will be cleared up. I cannot live thus any longer. To-morrow I will tell her father, Byelétski, and the whole village — "

Having previously passed two sleepless nights, and having drunk so much in celebrating the holiday, Lukáshka was at once taken off his feet, and remained at Yámka's, sleeping.

XL.

On the following day Olénin awoke earlier than usual. In the first moments of his awakening he had a clear recollection of what awaited him, and he joyfully remembered her kisses, the pressure of her rough hands, and her words, "What white hands you have!" He jumped up, and wanted to go at once to the ensign to sue for Maryánka's hand. The sun had not yet risen, and it seemed to Olénin that there was an uncommon commotion in the street: people were walking, riding, and talking. He threw over him his mantle and sprang out on the porch. The ensign's family was not yet up. Five Cossacks rode by, conversing noisily about something. They were preceded by Lukáshka, who rode his broad-shouldered Kabardá horse. The Cossacks were talking and shouting; it was impossible to make out what they were saying.

"Ride out to the upper post!" cried one.

"Saddle, and be up with us at once!" said another.

"It will be nearer to go by that gate."

"Nonsense!" cried Lukáshka. "We must go through the middle gate."

"From there it is nearer," said one of the Cossacks, dust-covered, and riding a sweaty horse. Lukáshka's face was flushed and swollen from the carousal of the night before; his cap was poised on the back of his head. He shouted in a commanding voice, as though he were the superior.

"What is up? Whither are you going?" asked

Olénin, finding it difficult to direct the Cossacks' attention to himself.

"We are going out to catch some abréks. They are sitting on the sand-dunes. We shall ride out at once, but we have not enough people with us."

The Cossacks, continuing to shout and to get ready, passed along the street. It occurred to Olénin that it would not be well if he did not go with them; besides, he thought he would return soon. He dressed himself, loaded his gun, jumped on his horse, which had been half-saddled by Vanyúsha, and caught up with the Cossacks as they were leaving the village. The Cossacks were standing around in a circle, hurrying to be off; they were pouring some red wine into a wooden bowl from a cask that had just been brought there, and, passing it around, were drinking for a propitious expedition. Among them was also a young foppish ensign, who happened to be in the village, and who had assumed the command of the nine Cossacks present. The Cossacks who had gathered there were of the rank and file, and though the ensign had the appearance of the leader of the expedition, they all obeyed only Lukáshka.

The Cossacks did not pay the least attention to Olénin. When they had all mounted their horses and started off, and Olénin, riding up to the ensign, began to inquire about the affair, the ensign, who usually was kindly disposed, looked down upon him from the height of his magnificence. With great difficulty Olénin managed to get some information from him. A patrol, which had been sent out to look for abréks, had discovered some mountaineers about eight versts from the village, on the dunes. The abréks were entrenched in a ditch, and threatened that they would not be taken alive. The under-officer, who was on the patrol with two more Cossacks, remained behind to keep watch on them, and had sent one of the Cossacks to the village to get reënforcement.

The sun had just begun to rise. About three versts from the village, the steppe stretched out on all sides, and nothing was to be seen but the monotonous, melancholy, dry plain, with the sand tracked by the cattle, with here and there some withered grass, with low reeds in the lowlands, with now and then barely perceptible paths, and with the Nogáy camps that were visible somewhere in the distance along the horizon. The absence of shade and the severe aspect of the locality were very striking.

The sun always rises and sets red in the steppe. The wind, when there is any, moves whole mountains of sand. When the air is calm, as it was on that morning, the quiet, which is broken by neither motion nor sound, is especially impressive. On that morning the steppe was calm and gloomy, even though the sun was up; the steppe was quite deserted, and the air was mellow. Not a breeze stirred. One could hear only the tramping and snorting of the horses; but even these sounds were feeble, and soon died away. The Cossacks generally rode in silence. Their weapons are always so adjusted that they shall neither clank nor clatter. A clattering weapon is the greatest disgrace to a Cossack. Two Cossacks from the village caught up with them on the road, and exchanged two or three words with them.

Lukáshka's horse either stumbled or caught his foot in the grass, and accelerated his steps. That is a bad omen with the Cossacks. The Cossacks looked around and immediately turned back their faces, trying not to pay any attention to the incident, which at that moment had a particular significance. Lukáshka pulled the reins, frowned severely, clinched his teeth, and cracked his whip overhead. The good Kabardá steed brought all his legs in motion, undecided which one to put down first, and as though desirous of rising on wings; but Lukáshka warmed him up with the whip over his plump flanks, then a second time, and a third, — and the Kabardá steed, showing

his teeth, raising his tail, and rearing on his hind legs, fell a few paces behind the other horses.

"Ah, that is a fine steed!" said the ensign.

His using the word "steed" for "horse" was meant as a special praise of the animal.

"A lion of a horse," affirmed one of the older Cossacks.

The Cossacks rode on in silence, now at a walk, now at a trot, and only that one incident interrupted for a moment the quiet and solemnity of the motion.

In the eight versts of their ride over the steppe, they met no signs of life but a Nogáy tent which, being placed on an ox-cart, was slowly moving about a verst away from them. It was a Nogáy who was moving with his family from one camping-ground to another. In a low, marshy place they met two Nogáy women with high cheek-bones, who, with wicker baskets on their backs, were collecting the dung of the cattle roving on the steppe, for fuel. The ensign, who spoke poor Kumýk, began to ask something of the Nogáy women; but they did not understand him, and glanced at each other, obviously terrified.

Lukáshka rode up, checked in his horse, briskly uttered the customary salutation, and the women were evidently reassured, and spoke with him as with their own.

"*Ay, ay, kop abrék!*" they said, pitifully, pointing in the direction in which the Cossacks were riding. Olénin understood that they were saying "Many abréks!"

Having never taken part in such an affair, and knowing of it only through Uncle Eróshka's recitals, Olénin did not wish to stay away from the Cossacks, but to see it all himself. He admired the Cossacks, watched and listened, and made his observations. Although he had taken with him his sabre and a loaded gun, he, noticing that the Cossacks were keeping aloof from him, decided not to take any part in the action, especially since his

courage, to his thinking, had been proved at the frontier, and chiefly because he was so happy now.

Suddenly a shot was heard in the distance.

The ensign was agitated and began to give orders to the Cossacks, how to separate, and from what side to approach them. But the Cossacks obviously did not pay the least attention to his commands, and listened only to what Lukáshka told them, and watched him only. In Lukáshka's face and whole figure was expressed calm and solemnity. He made his steed go at an amble, so that the other horses, that were going at a walk, fell behind, and, blinking, kept on looking into the distance.

"Here is one on horseback," he said, checking his horse, and falling in with the others.

Olénin gazed sharply, but could not see anything. The Cossacks soon distinguished two horsemen, and in a quiet walk rode up toward them.

"Are these the abréks?" asked Olénin.

The Cossacks did not reply to this question, which to them was foolish. The abréks would have been silly to cross on this side of the river with their horses.

"Brother Ródka is waving his hand to us, I think," said Lukáshka, pointing to the two men on horseback, who now could be clearly seen. "He is coming up to us."

Indeed, in a few minutes it became obvious that the men on horseback were the Cossacks of the patrol, and soon the under-officer rode up to Lukáshka.

XLI.

"Is it far?" was all Lukáshka asked.

At the same time a short report of a gun was heard within thirty paces. The under-officer smiled slightly.

"Our Gúrka is firing at them," he said, nodding his head in the direction of the report.

Having ridden a few more steps, they saw Gúrka sitting behind a sand-hill and loading his gun. To kill time, Gúrka kept on shooting at the abréks, who were sitting behind another sand-hill. A bullet whistled by from there.

The ensign was pale and confused. Lukáshka dismounted from his horse, turned him over to a Cossack, and walked over to Gúrka. Olénin did the same, and, bending down, followed him. No sooner had they reached the Cossack who was firing than two bullets whistled over their heads. Lukáshka smiled and, looking at Olénin, crouched down.

"They will kill you if you don't look out, Andréevich," he said. "You had better go away. You have no business here."

But Olénin was anxious to see the abréks.

He saw behind a mound, about two hundred paces from him, caps and guns. Suddenly a smoke appeared, and another bullet whizzed by. The abréks were sitting below the hill, in a swamp. Olénin was impressed by the place where they were entrenched. The spot was just like the rest of the steppe, but the fact that it was

occupied by the abréks somehow separated it from everything else and gave it a special significance. It appeared to him to be just the place for abréks to occupy. Lukáshka returned to his horse, and Olénin followed him.

"We must take the ox-cart with the hay," said Lukáshka, "or else they will kill us all. There, beyond a mound, stands the ox-cart with the hay."

The ensign listened to him, and the under-officer agreed with him. The hay-wagon was brought up, and the Cossacks, hiding behind it, began to spread the hay as a protection. Olénin rode out on a mound, from which everything could be seen. The hay-wagon moved ahead; the Cossacks pressed closely together back of it. The Cossacks moved forward; the Chechéns — there were nine of them — were sitting in a row, knee to knee, and did not shoot.

Everything was quiet. Suddenly on the side of the Chechéns rang out the strange sounds of a weird song, resembling the "*Ay dalalay*" of Uncle Eróshka. The Chechéns knew that there was no escape for them, and, to free themselves from the temptation of running away, they tied themselves together with leather straps, knee to knee, got their guns ready, and tuned the death-song.

The Cossacks came nearer and nearer to them with the hay-wagon, and Olénin expected to hear a fusilade any moment; but the calm was broken only by the weird song of the abréks. Suddenly the song was ended; there was heard a short report; a bullet struck against the cart-chain; Chechén curses and shouts rang out. One shot after another was fired, and one bullet after another struck the wagon. The Cossacks did not shoot, though they were within five steps of the Chechéns.

Another moment passed, and the Cossacks, shouting the war-cry, rushed out on both sides of the wagon. Lukáshka was in the lead. Olénin heard but a few shots fired, then crying and groaning. He saw smoke, and

blood, as he thought. He left his horse, and beside himself rushed up to the Cossacks. Terror shrouded his eyes. He could not make out anything, but he understood that everything was ended. Lukáshka, pale as a sheet, was holding a Chechén by his arm, and crying, "Don't kill him! I will take him alive!" The Chechén was the same red-haired fellow, the brother of the dead abrék, who had come to get his body. Lukáshka was twisting his arms. Suddenly the abrék tore himself loose and shot at him with his pistol. Lukáshka staggered and fell. On his abdomen appeared some blood. He jumped up, but again fell down, cursing in Russian and in Tartar. The blood on him and under him grew ever more abundant. The Cossacks walked over to him, and began to take off his belt. One of them, Nazárka, before helping him, was for quite awhile unable to sheathe his sabre, as he put it in the wrong way. The blade was all bloody.

The Chechéns, with their hair dyed red, and clipped moustaches, lay dead and hacked to pieces. Only one, the same that had shot Lukáshka, lay alive, though severely wounded. Like a wounded hawk, all drenched with blood (blood was flowing from his right eye), clinching his teeth, pale and gloomy, surveying everything with his large excited eyes, he sat on his heels, holding a dagger, and ready to defend himself again. The ensign walked over to him, and, pretending to make a circuit round him, with a rapid motion fired his pistol at his ear. The Chechén darted forward, but he fell before he could rise.

The Cossacks, out of breath, pulled the dead to one side, and took off their weapons. Each of these red-haired Chechéns was a man; each had his own peculiar features. Lukáshka was carried to the cart. He kept swearing in Russian and in Tartar.

"You are lying, I will choke you with my hands! You will not get away from my hands! *Anna seni!*"

he cried, making an effort to rush forward. Soon he grew silent from loss of blood.

Olénin rode home. In the evening he was told that Lukáshka was mortally wounded, but that a Tartar from across the river had undertaken to cure him.

The bodies were all dragged to the village office. Women and children ran there to see them.

Olénin returned home at dusk, and could not collect himself for a long time from the horrors which he had witnessed. In the evening the recollections of the day again burst upon him. Maryánka was going to and fro from the house to the shed, attending to her household duties. Her mother had gone to the vineyard. Her father was at the office. Olénin did not wait for her to get through with her work, and walked up to her. She was in the house, standing with her back to him. Olénin thought she was embarrassed.

"Maryánka," he said, "oh, Maryánka! May I come in?"

Suddenly she turned around. In her eyes stood barely perceptible tears. In her face was fair sorrow. She looked at him silently and majestically.

Olénin repeated:

"Maryánka! I have come —"

"Leave me," she said. Her face did not change, but tears gushed from her eyes.

"What is it about? What is the matter?"

"What?" she repeated, in a coarse and harsh voice. "Cossacks have been killed, that is the matter."

"Lukáshka?" asked Olénin.

"Go away! What do you want?"

"Maryánka!" said Olénin, walking over to her.

"Never will you get anything from me."

"Maryánka, don't say that," Olénin implored her.

"Go away! I am tired of you!" cried the girl, stamping her foot, and moving toward him with a threatening

mien. Her face expressed such disgust, contempt, and fury, that Olénin suddenly understood that he had nothing to hope for, and that what he had formerly thought of the unapproachability of this woman was an undeniable fact.

Olénin did not say anything, and ran out of the room.

XLII.

After returning home, he lay for two hours motionless on his bed; then he went to the captain, and asked for leave to visit the staff. He did not bid any one farewell, but sent his rent to the ensign through Vanyúsha, and got ready to journey to the fortress where the regiment was stationed. Only Uncle Eróshka saw him off. They drank together a glass, and then another, and then again. Just as upon his departure from Moscow, the stage three-span stood at the door. But Olénin did not cast his accounts with himself, as then, and did not say to himself that all he had been thinking and doing here was not that. He did not promise himself a new life. He loved Maryánka more than ever, and he knew that he could never be loved by her.

"Well, good-bye, my father!" said Uncle Eróshka. "If you ever take part in a campaign, be wiser, and listen to the advice of an old man. If you are out on an incursion, or wherever else it may be, — I am an old wolf, and have seen everything, — and there is some firing, don't go into a crowd where there are many people together. For it is the habit of you people, whenever you get scared, to jam together in a throng, thinking that it is merrier where there are a lot of you; but it is worse: the enemy always aims into a crowd. I always used to keep away from people, and to walk by myself, and so I have never been wounded. And I have seen a great deal in my lifetime."

"But you have a bullet in your back!" said Vanyúsha, who was cleaning up the room.

"The Cossacks did that while on a spree," replied Eróshka.

"The Cossacks? How so?" asked Olénin.

"Like this! They were drinking. Vánka Sítkin, a Cossack, was pretty drunk, and he took out his pistol, and bang! sent a bullet right into this spot."

"Did it pain you?" asked Olénin. "Vanyúsha, will you be done soon?" he added.

"Oh, in what a hurry you are! Let me tell you — He fired off; the bullet did not break my bone, but stopped right here. And so I told him: 'You have killed me, brother! Eh! What have you done to me? I will not let you off so easily. You will have to treat me to a bucket of wine.'"

"Well, did it hurt you?" again asked Olénin, scarcely hearing his story.

"Let me tell it to you. He put up the bucket. We drank together. And the blood was running all the time. I soiled the whole room with my blood. Then Grandfather Clodhopper said: 'The fellow will surely die. Let us have another stoup of sweet wine, or else we will have you in court.' They brought some more. And we filled ourselves up — "

"Well, did it hurt you?" again asked Olénin.

"Did it hurt? Don't interrupt me! I don't like that. Let me tell you the rest. We drank, and drank, and celebrated until morning, and I fell asleep on the oven, drunk. When I awoke in the morning, I could not unbend myself."

"Was it very painful?" repeated Olénin, thinking that now, at last, he would got an answer to his question.

"Did I tell you it hurt? It did not hurt, only I could not bend, nor walk."

"Well, and it healed up?" said Olénin, not even laughing, his heart was so heavy.

"Yes, but the bullet is still there. Just feel it!"

And he rolled up his shirt and showed his broad back, where a bullet was loosely encased near the bone.

"Do you see how it rolls around?" he said, evidently pleased with the bullet as with a toy. "Now it has rolled over to the back."

"Well, will Lukáshka live?" asked Olénin.

"God knows! There is no doctor here. They have gone for one."

"Where will they get one? At Gróznaya?" asked Olénin.

"No, my father, I would long ago have cut the throats of your Russian doctors, if I were the Tsar. All they know is to cut. They have spoiled our Cossack Bakláshev, by taking off his leg. Consequently they are fools. What is Bakláshev good for now? No, my father, in the mountains there are genuine doctors. During an expedition my friend Vorchík was wounded right here, in the chest, and your doctors gave him up, but Saíb came down from the mountains and cured him. They know all kinds of herbs, my father."

"Stop talking nonsense," said Olénin. "I had better send the surgeon from the staff."

"Nonsense?" the old man mimicked him. "Fool, fool! Nonsense! Send the surgeon! If your surgeons knew how to cure, the Cossacks and the Chechéns would go to get cured by them, whereas, your officers and colonels send for the doctors from the mountains. It is false, all false, with you people."

Olénin did not try to retort. He was too much of the opinion that everything was false in the world in which he used to live, and to which he was now going to return.

"How about Lukáshka? Have you seen him?" he asked.

"He is lying like one dead. He neither eats nor drinks. He won't stand anything but brandy. Well, he

is drinking brandy, — that's all right. I am sorry for the fellow. He was a good fellow, a brave, just like myself. I was once on the point of dying, and the women were howling, and howling. My head was hot. They already accounted me a saint. And so I was lying, and right above me, on the oven, tiny little drummers were sounding the reveille. I shouted to them, but they only drummed so much the harder." The old man laughed. "The women brought the chanter to me; they wanted to bury me, and so they said: 'He has led a worldly life, has kept company with women, has ruined souls, has eaten meat on fast-days, has played the balaláyka. Repent,' they said. And so I began to repent. 'I have sinned,' says I. No matter what the pope said, I repeated, 'I have sinned.' He began to ask me about the balaláyka. 'Where is it, that accursed thing?' says he. 'Let me have it, so I may smash it.' And I said I did not have it; but I had myself hidden it away in the dairy in a net. I knew they would not find it. And they gave me up. And I came to. And again I started to scrape the balaláyka — So, what was I saying?" he continued. "Take my advice, and keep away from crowds, or you will be killed. I am sorry for you, truly, I am. You are a toper, I like you. The rest of you fellows are fond of riding out to the mounds. There was one of them living here. He had come from Russia, and he had such a passion for mounds! Every time he saw a mound, he rode out to it. Once he galloped off. He galloped, and was so happy about it! And a Chechén shot at him, and killed him. The Chechéns are such fine shots with forked supports. There are better shots than I am. I do not like to see anybody killed in such a bad manner. I used to look at your soldiers, and wonder. What stupidity! My darlings walk together in a mass, and, besides, wear such red collars. How can one help hitting them? They kill one man, and while he is

dragged off, another man takes his place. What stupidity!" repeated the old man, shaking his head. "They ought to scatter, and walk one by one. And they ought to walk as if nothing were the matter. Then they would not find you out. That's the way it ought to be done."

"Well, good-bye, uncle! If God will grant it, we shall see each other again," said Olénin, rising and walking out to the vestibule.

The old man was sitting on the floor, and did not get up.

"Is this the way to say farewell? Fool, fool!" he said. "What people they are now! He has kept company with me, a whole year he has kept company, and now, 'Good-bye,' and off he goes. Don't you know, I love you, and am sorry for you? You are so gloomy, so lonely, such a lonely man! You are so shy! Many a time, when I could not sleep, have I thought of you, and felt sorry for you. As the song says:

"'Not so easy, my dear brother,
'Tis in foreign lands to live.'

And so it is with you."

"Well, good-bye," again said Olénin.

The old man got up and gave him his hand. Olénin pressed it, and wanted to leave.

"Your mug, your mug! Let me have it!"

The old man took him by the head with both his fat hands, kissed him three times with his wet moustache and lips, and began to weep.

"I love you, good-bye!"

Olénin seated himself in the vehicle.

"And so you are going! Give me, at least, a memento, my father! Give me a gun. What do you want two for?" said the old man, sobbing, and shedding real tears.

Olénin got the gun and gave it to him.

"What a lot of things you have given that old fellow!" grumbled Vanyúsha, "and it is still too little for him! Old beggar! What unreliable people!" he said, wrapping himself up in his overcoat, and taking his seat on the box.

"Shut up, swine!" cried the old man, laughing. "I declare, he is stingy!"

Maryánka came out of the shed, glanced indifferently at the tróyka, and, bowing, walked into the cabin.

"*La fille!*" said Vanyúsha, winking, and giving a dull laugh.

"Go," Olénin cried, angrily.

"Good-bye, father! Good-bye, I will remember you!" exclaimed Eróshka.

Olénin looked back. Uncle Eróshka was talking to Maryánka, apparently about his own affairs, and neither the old man nor the girl was looking at him.

SEVASTOPOL

In December, 1854, and in May and August, 1855

1854–1856

SEVASTOPOL

In December, 1854

THE dawn is just beginning to crimson the sky above Mount Sapún. The dark blue surface of the sea has cast off the nocturnal darkness, and is waiting for the first ray, in order to gleam forth in gay splendour. From the bay is wafted cold and mist; there is no snow, and everything is black, but the sharp morning frost pinches the face and crackles underfoot, and the distant, ceaseless roar of the sea, now and then interrupted by the booming of guns at Sevastopol, alone breaks the morning quiet. The ships are dark; eight bells are sounding.

On the Northern side the activity of the day slowly begins to replace the calm of the night. Here passes a patrol to relieve some sentinels, clanking their guns; there a surgeon is already hastening to the hospital; there a soldier has crept out of his earth hut and is washing his sunburnt face with ice-crusted water, and, turning to the ruddy east, and swiftly crossing himself, says his prayers; here a tall, heavy camel cart, with creaking wheels, is creeping to the cemetery to bury the blood-stained dead, with whom it is loaded almost to the top.

You walk down to the harbour. You are struck by a peculiar odour of coal, dung, dampness, and beef. A

thousand different objects, wood, meat, gabions, flour, iron, are lying in heaps on the quay. Soldiers of various regiments, with bags and guns, without bags and without guns, are crowding here, smoking, swearing, dragging heavy burdens to a steamboat which, puffing smoke, is lying near the landing. Private two-oared boats, filled with all kinds of people, — soldiers, sailors, merchants, women, — are landing or leaving the quay.

"To the Gráfskaya, your Honour? Please!" Two or three former sailors, getting out of their boats, are offering you their services.

You choose the one who is nearest to you, step across the half-decayed carcass of a chestnut horse, which is lying in the mud near the boat, and walk over to the stern. You push off from the shore. All around you is the sea, glittering in the morning sun; before you is an old sailor in a camel's-hair overcoat, and a fair-haired young boy, intently pulling at the oar in silence. You look at the outstretched masses of the ships scattered far and wide over the bay; at the diminutive black dots of the sloops moving on the brilliant azure of the sea; at the beautiful, bright structures of the city that may be discerned on the other side, tinged by the purple beams of the morning sun; at the foaming white line of the mole; at the submerged ships from which tower mournfully the black tops of masts; at the far-off hostile fleet shimmering on the crystal horizon of the ocean; at the frothing streaks, in which leap the briny bubbles raised by the oars; you hear the even sound of voices which reaches you over the water, and the majestic sounds of firing which, so you think, is growing louder in Sevastopol.

At the thought of being in Sevastopol, you are involuntarily stirred by a certain feeling of courage and pride, and your blood begins to course more rapidly in your veins.

"Your Honour! Make straight for *Kistentin*,"[1] the old sailor tells you, turning back in order to verify the direction which you are giving to the boat on the right of the rudder.

"She has still all her guns," remarks the fair-haired lad, passing by the vessel, and scrutinizing it.

"Why, of course. She is a new boat: Kornflov has been living on her," remarked the old man, also gazing at the vessel.

"I declare, it did burst!" says the boy, gazing, after a prolonged silence, at the white cloud of a dispersing smoke, which had suddenly appeared high over the southern bay, and which is accompanied by the sharp sound of an exploding bomb.

"He is firing to-day from the new battery," adds the old man, with equanimity spitting on his hand. "Come now, give way, Míshka, let us overtake the long-boat!" And your boat moves more rapidly ahead over the broadly billowing bay, really overtakes the heavy long-boat filled with some kind of bags, and unevenly propelled by awkward soldiers, and lands, among numerous craft alongside the shore, at the Gráfskaya quay.

On the shore move about noisily groups of soldiers in gray, sailors in black, and women in variegated attires. Women are selling rolls; Russian peasants with samovárs cry, "Hot sbiten;"[2] and right here on the very first steps lie in disorder rusty shells, bombs, canister-shot, and cast-iron cannon of various calibres. A little farther off is a large square, where are scattered huge beams, gun-carriages, sleeping soldiers; here stand horses, carts, green ordnance and caissons, and infantry scaffolding; there move about soldiers, sailors, officers, women, children, and merchants; there carts with hay, with bags, and with

[1] The steamer *Constantine*.

[2] A drink composed of hot water and honey. Sometimes capsicum and other spices are added.

barrels drive around, and occasionally a Cossack passes by, and an officer on horseback or a general in a vehicle, pass by.

On the right, the street is shut off by a barricade, in the embrasures of which are placed some small cannon, and near them sits a sailor, smoking his pipe. On the left is a beautiful house with Roman figures on the pediment, and beneath it stand soldiers and blood-stained litters, — everywhere you see the unpleasant signs of a military camp.

Your first impression is necessarily most disagreeable: the strange mixture of camp and city life, of the beautiful town and the dirty bivouac, is not only not beautiful, but even seems like vile disorder; and you imagine that everybody is frightened, that people are bustling around, not knowing what to do. But look more closely into the faces of the men who are moving about, and you will get a different impression. Look, for example, at this soldier of the baggage-train, who is taking a chestnut tróyka to the water, and who is calmly mumbling something to himself; it is evident that he will not lose his way in this motley crowd, which, indeed, does not exist for him, and that he is executing his work, whatever it may be, — to water horses or drag ordnance, — as calmly, and with the same self-confidence and indifference, as though all this were taking place at Túla or at Saránsk. The same expression you read in the countenance of this officer, who passes by you in immaculately white gloves, and in the countenance of the sailor, who is smoking while sitting on the barricade, and in the countenances of the busy soldiers, who with the litters are waiting at the steps of the former Assembly House, and in the countenance of this maiden, who, fearing to soil her pink dress, trips from stone to stone across the street.

Yes, you will certainly be disappointed when you first enter Sevastopol. In vain will you look in one single

face for traces of flurry and confusion, or even of enthusiasm, readiness to die, and determination. There is nothing of that. You see every-day people quietly occupied with every-day affairs, so that you will, no doubt, reproach yourself for your superabundant transport, and will be inclined to question the justness of the conception which you have formed about the heroism of the defenders of Sevastopol, from stories and from description, and from the aspect of things and from the sounds on the Northern side. But, before expressing your doubt, walk down to the bastions, take a look at the defenders of Sevastopol in the very place of the defence, or, still better, walk into the house opposite, which used to be the Assembly House of the Sevastopol nobility, and at the entrance of which the soldiers are standing with the litters, — and you will there see the defenders of Sevastopol; you will there see terrible and sad, great and amusing, but surprising and exalting spectacles.

You walk into the great assembly hall. You barely open the door, and you are at once impressed by the sight and odour of forty or fifty patients who are severely wounded or have suffered amputation, some on cots, but most on the floor. Do not trust your feeling which holds you back on the threshold of the hall, — it is a wrong feeling; walk on, and have no shame, as though you had come to look at the sufferers. Do not be ashamed to walk up and talk to them: the unfortunate like to see a sympathetic human face, like to tell of their sufferings, and to hear the words of love and sympathy. You pass along the aisle between the beds, and select a less severe and agonized face, and you take heart and walk over to talk with him.

"On what part of the body are you wounded?" you irresolutely and timidly ask an old, haggard soldier, who, sitting up on his cot, follows you with his good-natured glance, and almost invites you to come over to him. I

say "you ask timidly," because their sufferings, in addition to your sympathy, inspire you with a dread of offending, and with a deep respect for him who is bearing the suffering.

"In my leg," answers the soldier; but you immediately notice by the folds of the coverlet that he has lost his leg above the knee. "Thank God now," he adds, "I want to be discharged."

"How long ago were you wounded?"

"This is the sixth week, sir!"

"Does it still hurt?"

"No, it does not; only in bad weather I have a kind of pain in the thigh, that's all."

"How did you come to be wounded?"

"In the fifth *baksion*, sir, during the first *bardment*. I had trained my cannon, and was moving like this toward the second embrasure, when he struck me in the leg, and I felt as though I had stepped into a ditch. I looked down, and saw my leg was gone."

"Did it really not pain you at first?"

"No; only it felt as though some one had stuck something hot into my leg."

"And later?"

"And later it did not hurt either; only when they began to stretch the skin, there was a little itching. The main thing, sir, is not to think: if you don't think you are all right. People generally suffer because they think."

Just then a woman in a gray striped dress and wrapped in a black kerchief walks over to you. She takes part in your conversation with a sailor, and begins to tell you about him, about his suffering, about the desperate condition in which he was for four weeks, and how, after he was wounded, he had them stop the litter that he might see the volley of our battery; how the grand dukes talked to him and made him a present of twenty-five

roubles, and how he told them that he wanted to go back to the bastion, in order to teach the younger men, even though he could not work himself. Saying all this in one breath, the woman looks now at you, and now at the sailor, who turns away his face as though he did not hear her and picks at some lint on the pillow, and her eyes sparkle with unusual enthusiasm.

"This is my wife, sir!" remarks the sailor, with an expression which says: "You must pardon her. Of course, she is a woman, and she is saying foolish things."

You begin to understand the defenders of Sevastopol; for some unknown reason you feel ashamed before this man. You would like to tell him so much, in order to express your sympathy and admiration; but you cannot find words, or are dissatisfied with those that occur to you, — and you bow in silence before this speechless, unconscious grandeur and firmness of spirit, this modesty as regards his own worth.

"Well, God grant that you recover soon!" you say to him, and you stop in front of another patient, who is lying on the floor, and apparently awaiting death in unspeakable agony.

It is a fair-complexioned man, with a swollen, pale face. He is on his back, his left hand thrown under his head, in an attitude expressive of excruciating pain. The dry, open mouth with difficulty emits a stertorous breath; his blue, leaden eyes are turned upwards, and the bandaged stump of his right arm protrudes from underneath the rumpled coverlet. The oppressive odour of dead flesh impresses you still more forcibly, and the consuming, internal fire, which penetrates all the limbs of the sufferer, seems to penetrate you, too.

"Is he unconscious?" you ask the woman who is walking behind you, and who glances kindly at you, as at a relative.

"No, he can hear still, though very faintly," she adds,

in a whisper. "I have offered him some tea to-day,— well, even though he is a stranger to me, I ought to pity him, — but he hardly drank any."

"How do you feel?" you ask him.

The wounded soldier rolls his pupils, in reply to your voice, but he does not see, nor understand you.

"A burning in my heart!"

A little farther on, you see an old soldier changing his linen. His face and body are of an indefinite cinnamon colour, and as lean as a skeleton's. He has no arm at all: it has been cauterized at the armpit. He sits up briskly; but by his dull, dim eyes, by the terrible leanness and the wrinkles of his face, you see that he is a creature that has forfeited the better part of his life in suffering.

On the other side, you notice on a cot the agonized, pale, gentle face of a woman, upon whose cheek plays a feverish glow.

"Our sailor woman was struck by a bomb on the fifth," your guide tells you. "She was bringing her husband his dinner to the bastion."

"Well, did they cut it off?"

"Yes, above the knee."

If your nerves are strong, go now through the door on the left: in that room they are putting on bandages and performing operations. You will there see doctors, with arms blood-stained up to their elbows, and pale, morose countenances, busy at a cot, on which, with open eyes and speaking, as though in delirium, meaningless but sometimes simple and touching words, lies a wounded soldier, under the influence of chloroform. The doctors are occupied with the disgusting but beneficent work of amputation. You will see the sharp, bent knife entering the healthy body; you will see the wounded man suddenly come to his senses, with a terrible, piercing cry, and with curses; you will see the surgeon's assistant throw the

amputated arm into a corner; you will see, on a litter, in the same room, another wounded man, who, watching the operation performed on his companion, writhes and groans, not so much from physical pain, as from the moral anguish of anticipation, — you will see terrible, soul-stirring spectacles; you will see war, not in its regular, beautiful, and brilliant array, with music and drum-taps, with fluttering flags, and generals going through evolutions with their horses, but war in its real aspect, — in blood, in suffering, in death.

Upon issuing from this house of suffering, you will certainly experience a feeling of relief; you will breathe in the fresh air with fuller lungs, will feel pleasure in the consciousness of your health, but, at the same time, in the contemplation of this suffering, you will draw the consciousness of your nothingness, and you will go calmly and without any indecision to the bastions.

"What do the death and suffering of such an insignificant worm as I mean in comparison with so many deaths and so much suffering?" But the sight of the clear sky, the gleaming sun, the beautiful city, the open church, and the military moving in various directions soon brings your mind into the normal condition of light-heartedness, petty cares, and preoccupation with the present alone.

Maybe you will see emerging from the church the funeral of some officer, with a rose-coloured coffin, and music, and unfurled banners; maybe the sounds of firing from the bastions reach your ear, but that will not induce your former thoughts. The funeral will appear to you as a very fine warlike spectacle, the sounds as very fine warlike sounds, but you will not connect with this spectacle, nor with these sounds, the clear idea of suffering and death which you have formed at the point where the wounds are dressed.

After passing the church and the barricade, you will enter into the most animated part of the city, living its

own inner life. On both sides are the signs of shops and inns. Tradespeople, women in bonnets and kerchiefs, foppish officers, — everything tells of the firmness of spirit, the self-confidence, and the security of the inhabitants.

Go into the inn on the right, if you wish to hear the conversations of the sailors and officers: no doubt they are now telling of the past night, of Fénka, of the action of the 24th, of how expensive and bad the cutlets are that they serve, and of how this or that companion was killed.

"The deuce take it, but it's bad with us to-day!" says a fair-browed, beardless naval officer in a green, hand-made scarf.

"Where is that?" asks another.

"In the fourth bastion," answers the youthful officer, and you are sure to look with greater attention, and even with a certain reverence, at the fair-browed officer, as he mentions the fourth bastion. His too great volubility, his waving of hands, his loud laughter and voice, which had struck you as impudent, now will appear to you as that peculiar dare-devil mood which some very young men acquire after peril; still, you imagine that he is going to tell you how bad it is in the fourth bastion from the cannon-balls and bombs: not at all! it is bad because it is dirty there.

"It is impossible to walk over to the battery," he says, pointing at his boots, which are covered with mud above the calf.

"My best gun-captain has been killed to-day, — he was struck in the forehead," says another.

"Who? Mityúkhin? No — Shall I ever get that veal? Rascals!" he adds, turning to the waiter —

"Not Mityúkhin, but Abrámov. He was a brave fellow, — he was in six sorties."

At the other corner of the table two infantry officers

are seated at cutlets and peas, with a bottle of sour Crimean wine, called "Bordeaux:" one of them, with a red collar and two stars on his overcoat, a young man, is telling the other, with a black collar and without stars, about the action at Álma. The first has imbibed a little freely, and from the hesitation in his recital, from the indecision in his glance, expressive of a suspicion that he is doubted, but especially from the fact that he is playing too great a part in all this, and that it is all too terrible, it is evident that he is swerving greatly from stern truth.

But you do not care for these stories, which you will, for a long time to come, hear in all the corners of Russia: you want to go at once to the bastions, especially to the fourth, of which you have been told so many different tales. When somebody tells you that he has been in the fourth bastion, he announces the fact with special delight and pride; when some one says that he is going to the fourth bastion, you will be sure to notice a slight agitation in him, or too great an indifference; if they wish to tease somebody, they tell him, "You ought to be stationed in the fourth bastion;" if you meet a litter, and ask, "Where from?" the answer is generally, "From the fourth bastion." There are, on the whole, two distinct opinions in regard to this terrible bastion: one, the opinion of those who have never been there, and who are convinced that the fourth bastion is a sure grave for any one who does go there; the other, the opinion of those who live in it, like that fair-complexioned midshipman, and who will say of the fourth bastion, that it is dry or dirty there, warm or cold in the earth huts, and so forth.

In the half-hour which you have had in the inn, the weather has changed: the fog that has been hanging over the sea has gathered into gray, dull, damp clouds, and is shrouding the sun; a gloomy, frozen mist is settling

down and wetting the roofs, the sidewalks, and the overcoats of the soldiers.

You pass another barricade, and through a door on the right walk up a broad street. Beyond this barricade the houses on both sides of the street are uninhabited; there are no shop signs, the doors are covered with boards, the windows are broken; here a corner of the house is shattered, there a roof is pierced. The structures look like old veterans who have suffered all kinds of woe and want, and seem to be looking haughtily, and even somewhat contemptuously, at you. On the road you stumble on shells strewn about, and on puddles full of water, dug out by bombs in the stony soil. In the street you meet or catch up with detachments of soldiers, Cossack sharpshooters, and officers; occasionally you see a woman or a child. The woman does not wear a bonnet; she is a sailor's wife, in a fur jacket and soldier boots.

Proceeding along the street and descending a small hill, you observe all about you, not houses, but certain strange ruin-heaps of stones, boards, clay, and beams; in front of you, on a steep hill, you see a black, dirty space, checkered by ditches, — and that is the fourth bastion. Here you find still fewer people; one sees no women at all; the soldiers walk rapidly; along the road you may notice drops of blood, and you are sure to meet four soldiers with a litter, and on the litter a pale, sallow face, and a blood-stained overcoat. If you ask, "Where are you wounded?" the bearers will tell you, angrily, without turning toward you, "In the leg," or "In the arm," if he is slightly wounded; or they will keep sullen silence, if the head does not appear on the litter, or he is dead, or severely wounded.

The whizzing of a cannon-ball or bomb near by, while you are ascending the hill, gives you an unpleasant sensation. You suddenly will understand, quite differently from what you understood before, the meaning of those

discharges which you had heard in the city. Some joyful recollection will suddenly flash through your imagination; your own personality will begin to interest you more than your observations; you will show less attention to your surroundings, and you will suddenly be seized by an unpleasant sensation of indecision. In spite of this mean little voice at the sight of peril, which is speaking within you, you, especially as you glance at the soldier who, waving his arms, and slipping down-hill over the liquid mud, runs toward you, laughing, — you silence that voice, involuntarily straighten out your chest, lift your head higher, and clamber up the slippery hill of clay.

You have barely reached the summit, when on the right and left of you rifle-balls begin to whizz, and you stop to reflect whether you had not better walk in the trench, which runs parallel to the road; but the trench is filled more than knee-deep with such a liquid, yellow, ill-smelling mud, that you will certainly select the road along the brow of the hill, especially since you see everybody else walking in the road. After passing two hundred steps, you come out on a dirty expanse which is all dug up, and which is surrounded on all sides by gabions, earthworks, casemates, platforms, and dug-outs, on which stand large cast-iron guns, and on which cannon-balls lie in regular heaps. Everything seems to be scattered about without any aim, connection, or order. Here, in the battery, sits a group of sailors; there in the middle of the space, half-buried in the mud, lies a broken cannon; there an infantry soldier, shouldering his gun, crosses the battery, and with difficulty pulls his feet out of the sticky mud. But everywhere, on all sides, and in all places, you see splinters, unexploded bombs, cannon-balls, signs of the camp, — and all that is merged in the liquid, viscous mud. Not far from you, as you imagine, you hear a cannon-ball strike; you think you hear on all sides the various sounds of bullets, — buzzing like a bee,

whistling, whizzing, or whining like a string, — you hear the terrible booming of a discharge which shakes you all up, and seems awful and terrible to you.

"So here it is, the fourth bastion! Here is this terrible, truly awful place!" you think, experiencing a slight sensation of pride and a mighty sensation of suppressed terror. But you must be undeceived; this is not yet the fourth bastion. This is the Yazónov redoubt, — a comparatively secure, and not at all terrible place. In order to reach the fourth bastion, turn to the right, along this narrow trench, along which a foot-soldier is moving with bent body. Along this trench you will, perhaps, again meet stretchers, a sailor, soldiers with spades; you will see miners, and dug-outs in the mud, into which two men can creep by bending; and you will see there the sharpshooters of the Black Sea battalions, who change their boots, eat, smoke their pipes, and live in there; and you will see again the same stinking mud all around you, the traces of an encampment, and abandoned cast iron of every possible shape.

By walking another three hundred steps, you again come out to a battery, — to a small square cut up by ditches, and surrounded by gabions filled with dirt, guns on platforms, and earth ramparts. Here you will, probably, see some five sailors, playing cards under the breastwork, and a naval officer, who, noticing that you are a newcomer, and curious, will gladly show you everything under his charge which might interest you. This officer so calmly rolls up a cigarette with yellow paper, while seated on a gun, so calmly passes from one embrasure to another, so calmly speaks with you, without the least affectation, that, in spite of the bullets, which whizz above you oftener than before, you yourself become cool, and attentively question the officer and listen to his story.

This officer will tell you — but only if you question him about it — of the bombardment of the 5th; he

will tell you how only one gun of his battery could be put in action, and how of all the attendants only eight men were left, and how, nevertheless, on the following 6th, he fired off all his guns; he will tell you how on the 5th a cannon-ball entered an earth hut of the sailors, and laid low eleven men; he will show you through the embrasure the batteries and trenches of the enemy, which are here not more than from two hundred to two hundred and fifty feet distant. I am, however, afraid that under the influence of the buzzing bullets, you, leaning out of the embrasure, in order to catch a glimpse of the enemy, will see nothing, or, if you do see, you will be very much surprised to find that this white rocky rampart, which is so near to you, and where now and then burst white cloudlets of smoke, — that this white rampart is the enemy, — he, as the soldiers and sailors say.

It is even quite possible that the naval officer, from vanity, or simply to afford himself an amusement, will want to do a little firing in your presence. "Send the gun-captain and the crew up to the gun!" and about fourteen sailors, putting their pipes into their pockets, or hurriedly munching their hardtack, will briskly and gaily walk up to the gun, clattering with their spiked boots on the platform, and load it. Look closely at the faces, the whole form, and the movements of these men: in every wrinkle of their sunburnt, broad-cheeked faces, in every muscle, in the breadth of their shoulders, in the stoutness of their legs, clad in huge boots, in every motion — calm, firm, deliberate — are seen the chief characteristics of Russian strength, simplicity and tenacity; but here, you imagine that the peril, the wretchedness, and the sufferings of war have imprinted on every face, in addition to these chief traits, the consciousness of their own worth, and of elevated thought and feeling.

Suddenly a frightful roar, which shakes not only your aural organs, but your whole being as well, startles you

so that your whole body quivers. Thereupon you hear the retreating whistle of the projectile, and a dense powder smoke envelops you, the platform, and the black figures of the sailors moving upon it. About this shot of ours you will hear various comments by the sailors, and you will observe their animation, and the manifestation of a feeling which, perhaps, you had not expected to see, — the feeling of malice, of revenging themselves on the enemy, which is concealed in every breast.

"Struck right into the embrasure; I think it has killed two — there they are carrying them," are the joyful exclamations you hear. "Now, he is getting mad; he will let her go in a minute," somebody remarks, and, indeed, soon after you see a flash and smoke in front of you. The sentry on the breastwork cries, "Can-non!" Immediately after a cannon-ball whines past you, splashes against the ground, and scatters a funnel-shaped mass of débris and stones about you. The commander of the battery is angry at this ball, and orders them to load a second and third gun; the enemy keeps returning the fire, and you experience interesting sensations, and hear and see interesting things.

The sentry again shouts "Cannon!" and you hear the same sound and thud, and see the same débris; or he calls out "Mortar!" and you hear the even, fairly agreeable whistling of a bomb, with which you find it hard to connect the idea of something terrible; you hear this whistling coming nearer and growing faster; then you see a black ball, feel a palpable blow against the ground, and hear the ringing explosion of the bomb. Then the splinters fly through the air whistling and whining; stones rustle in the air, and you are bespattered with mud. At these sounds you experience a strange sensation of pleasure, and at the same time of fear. During the moment when you are conscious of the projectile's flight above your head, you cannot help thinking that it

will kill you; but a feeling of vanity sustains you, and nobody notices the knife that is cutting your heart. But when the projectile has passed by you, without doing you any harm, you revive, and you are seized, though only for an instant, by a blissful, inexpressibly pleasant sensation, so that you find a special charm in danger, in this game of life and death; you want the balls or bombs to fall closer and closer to you.

But the sentry shouts again, in his loud, thick voice, "Mortar!" and again there is a whistle, a blow, and an explosion of a bomb; but at the very moment of this sound you are startled by the groan of a man. You reach the wounded man, who, blood-stained and bespattered with mud, has a strange inhuman aspect, at the same time as the stretcher. A part of the sailor's chest has been torn out. In the first few minutes you see on his mud-covered face nothing but terror and a feigned, premature expression of suffering, peculiar to a man in this condition; but when the stretcher is brought and the wounded man is placed there on his sound side, you observe that this expression is exchanged for one of ecstasy and of an exalted, unexpressed thought; his eyes burn more brightly, his teeth are set, his head raises itself with difficulty, and, while he is being lifted up, he halts the stretcher, and with effort, and in a trembling voice, says to his companions, "Forgive me, brothers!" He wants to say something else, and it is evident that he wants to say something touching, but he only repeats "Forgive me, brothers!" Just then a fellow sailor walks over to him, puts his cap on his head, which the wounded man holds up for the purpose, and calmly, with equanimity, waving his arms, returns to his gun.

"Seven or eight men a day are taken off that way," the naval officer informs you, in response to the expression of terror on your face, yawning and rolling his cigarette of yellow paper.

And so you have seen the defenders of Sevastopol in the very place of the defence, and you walk back, for some reason paying no attention to the balls and bullets which continue to whistle until you reach the ruins of the theatre, — you walk in a quiet, exalted mood. The main and consoling conviction which you have carried away is that it is impossible to break the strength of the Russian people, — and this impossibility you have seen, not in the mass of traverses, breastworks, cunningly intertwined trenches, mines, and ordnance piled upon each other, of which you did not understand a thing, but in the eyes, speeches, and manner, in what is called the spirit, of the defenders of Sevastopol. What they are doing, they do so simply, with so little effort, and with such intensity, that you are persuaded that they are able to do a hundred things more — they can do anything.

You comprehend that the feeling which makes them work is not that feeling of paltriness, vanity, obliviousness, such as you have experienced yourself, but another, more powerful sentiment which has made of them men who live calmly under cannon-balls, surrounded by hundreds of accidents of death, instead of the one death to which all men are subject, and who live under these conditions amidst uninterrupted labour, vigilance, and mud. People cannot assume these terrible conditions for the sake of a cross, a name, or a threat; there must be another, higher impelling cause. This cause is a feeling which rarely comes to the surface and is kept in bashful abeyance in a Russian, but which is in the depth of every soul, — the love of his country. Only now the stories about the first siege of Sevastopol, when there were no fortifications in it, no armies, no physical possibility of retaining it, and yet when there was not the slightest doubt that it would not surrender to the enemy, — about the times when that hero, worthy of ancient Greece, Kornilóv, driving through the army, said, "We will die, boys,

but will not surrender Sevastopol," and our Russians, incapable of expressing themselves glibly, answered, "We will die, hurrah!" — only now the stories about these times have ceased for you to be a beautiful historical tradition, but have become a certainty, a fact. You can easily comprehend and imagine to yourselves the people whom you have just seen as those heroes, who in those troublous times did not fall, but rise in spirit, and with delight prepared themselves to die, not for the city, but for their country. This epic of Sevastopol, of which the Russian nation was the hero, will long leave grand traces in Russia.

It is growing toward evening. The sun, before setting, has emerged from the gray clouds which veil the sky, and suddenly has illuminated with its crimson light the violet clouds, the greenish sea that is covered with ships and boats and that is agitated in an even, broad swell, and the white structures of the city, and the people moving about in its streets. Over the water are borne the sounds of some antiquated waltz, which the regimental band is playing in the boulevard, and the sounds of volleys from the bastions, which strangely echo them.

Sevastopol, April 25, 1855.

IN MAY, 1855

I.

Six months have passed since the time when the first cannon-ball whistled from the bastions of Sevastopol and tore up the earth in the works of the enemy, and since then thousands of bombs, balls, and bullets have been flying incessantly from the bastions into the trenches, and from the trenches into the bastions, and the angel of death has not ceased hovering over them.

Thousands of human ambitions have been slighted, thousands have been satisfied, or puffed up, and thousands have been put to rest in the embraces of death. What a mass of rose-coloured coffins and linen shrouds! But still the same sounds are heard from the bastions; with the same involuntary trepidation and terror the French are looking on a clear day from their encampment on the yellowish, furrowed earth of the bastions of Sevastopol, on the black figures of our sailors moving on them, and counting the embrasures from which threateningly protrude our iron guns. Just so the master's mate in the telegraph tower surveys through the glasses the motley forms of the French, their batteries, tents, columns, moving about on the green hill, and the puffs of smoke that flash in the trenches; and with the same eagerness heterogeneous masses of men from all the corners of the world, with still more heterogeneous desires, are streaming into this fateful spot. And the question, still undecided by diplomacy, has not yet been solved by powder and blood.

II.

In the besieged city of Sevastopol, the regimental band was playing in the boulevard, near the pavilion, and throngs of the military and of women were strolling leisurely through its avenues. The bright vernal sun had risen in the morning above the works of the English, had passed over to the bastions, thence to the city, to the Nicholas barracks, and, shining with equal cheer upon all, was now sinking toward the blue, distant sea, which swayed in even motion and was resplendent with a silvery sheen.

A tall infantry officer, with rather stooping shoulders, who was drawing on his hand a clean, though not very white, glove, came out of the gate in front of a small sailor cottage, built on the left side of Ocean Street, and, looking pensively at his feet, ascended the street toward the boulevard.

The expression of this officer's homely countenance did not betray any great mental powers, but simple-mindedness, thoughtfulness, honesty, and a tendency to sobriety. He was badly built, not very agile, and apparently timid in his movements. He was dressed in a little worn cap, a light overcoat of a rather peculiar lilac shade, behind the edge of which could be seen a gold watch-chain, pantaloons with foot-straps, and clean, well-polished calfskin boots. He might have been a German, if the features of his face had not indicated his pure Russian origin, or an adjutant, or a regimental quartermaster (but then he would have had spurs), or an officer who for the period of the cam-

paign had left the cavalry or, perhaps, the Guards. He was, in reality, a former cavalry officer, and at the present moment, as he was walking up toward the boulevard, he was thinking of a letter which he had received from his former comrade, now out of service and a landed proprietor in the Government of T——, and from his wife, pale, blue-eyed Natásha, his great friend. He recalled one passage in that letter, in which his comrade said:

"When the *Invalid* is brought to us, *Púpka* (thus the ex-uhlan called his wife) rushes headlong into the ante-chamber, seizes the gazette, runs with it to the bay window in the *arbour*, or into the *drawing-room* (in which, as you will remember, we have passed such delightful winter evenings, when the regiment was stationed in our city), and reads the heroic deeds of you soldiers with such zeal as you can hardly imagine. She frequently says of you: 'Now, Mikháylov,' says she, 'is a *dear*. I am ready to kiss him when I see him. He *is fighting in the bastions*, and will certainly get the Cross of St. George, and they will write about him in the papers—' and so forth, so that I am beginning in all earnestness to be jealous of you."

In another passage he said:

"The gazettes reach us dreadfully late, and though there is a lot of oral news, you can't believe it all. For example, the young *ladies with music*, whom you know, were saying yesterday that Napoleon had been captured by our Cossacks, and sent to St. Petersburg; but you can imagine how little I believe this. We were told by a gentleman who has arrived from St. Petersburg (he has a place on special affairs at a minister's, a charming fellow, and now that there is no one in town, he is the greatest imaginable *resource* to us) so he assures us that our men have occupied Eupatória, so that *the French have no longer any communication with Balaklávа*, and that we had two hundred soldiers killed in this action,

while the French lost fifteen thousand. My wife was so elated at this, that she *caroused* all night, and she says that her heart tells her that you have certainly taken part in this action, and have distinguished yourself."

In spite of the words and expressions which I have purposely given in italics, and of the whole tone of the letter, Staff-Captain Mikháylov recalled, with inexpressibly melancholy pleasure, his pale friend in the province, and how he used to sit with her in the arbour in the evenings, and talk about sentiments; he recalled his good comrade, the uhlan, and how he would get angry and lose, when they played in the study at kopek-stakes, and how his wife would laugh at him; he thought of the friendship of these people for himself (maybe, he thought, there was something more than friendship on the side of his pale friend): these people with their surroundings flashed through his imagination in a remarkably soothing, blissfully rose-coloured light, and, smiling at his reminiscences, he placed his hand on the pocket where lay the letter which was so *dear* to him.

From the reminiscences Staff-Captain Mikháylov involuntarily passed to dreams and hopes. "What will be Natásha's surprise and joy," he thought, striding through a narrow side street, "when she suddenly reads in the *Invalid* how I was the first to climb on a cannon, and received the Cross of St. George! The captaincy I am to receive anyway, having been recommended for it long ago. Then I may easily get the grade of major by seniority this very year, because many of my fellow officers have been killed in this campaign, and many more, no doubt, will be. And then there will be another engagement, and I, as a well-known man, will be entrusted with a regiment — lieutenant-colonel — the Anna decoration on my neck — colonel — " and he was already a general, honouring with his visit Natásha, the widow of his comrade, who, according to his dreams, would be dead

by that time, — when the sounds of the boulevard music reached his ears more distinctly, the throngs of people burst upon his vision, and he found himself in the boulevard, a staff-captain as before.

III.

He went, at first, to the pavilion, near which stood the musicians, for whom other soldiers of the regiment acted as stands and held the open music, and near whom scribes, yunkers, and nurses with their children formed a circle, rather looking on than listening. About the pavilion stood, sat, and walked chiefly sailors, adjutants, and officers in white gloves. On the broad avenue of the boulevard walked all sorts of officers and all sorts of women, now and then in bonnets, but more often in kerchiefs (there were also some without kerchiefs or bonnets); there was not an old woman among them, but, on the contrary, all were young. Farther below, in the fragrant, shady avenues of white acacias, walked or sat separate groups.

No one on the boulevard was especially delighted to meet Captain Mikháylov, except, perhaps, Captain Obzhógov and Captain Súslikov of his own regiment, who fervently pressed his hand; but the former wore camel's-hair trousers, no gloves, a threadbare overcoat, and had a sweaty face, and the latter shouted so loudly and carelessly, that it was annoying to walk with them, especially in the presence of the officers with the white gloves (to one of whom, an adjutant, Staff-Captain Mikháylov bowed, and to another, an officer of the staff, he could have bowed, because he had met him twice in the house of a common acquaintance). Besides, what pleasure was it to him to walk with Messrs. Obzhógov and Súslikov, since he met them without this about six times

a day, and each time pressed their hands? It was not for this that he had come to the *music*.

It would give him pleasure to walk up to the adjutant, with whom he exchanged greetings, and to talk with him and his company, not that Captains Obzhógov and Súslikov and Lieutenant Pashtétski might see that he was speaking with them, but simply because they were pleasant people, and besides knew all the news, and would tell it to him.

But why was Staff-Captain Mikháylov afraid to walk over to them? "What if they suddenly should not bow to me," he thought, "or if they should bow and continue speaking among themselves, as if I were not present, or should walk entirely away from me, and I should remain all alone among the *aristocrats!*" The word *aristocrats* (in the sense of a higher, select circle, in whatsoever condition in life) has of late acquired with us, in Russia, where, it seems, it ought never to exist, great popularity, and has penetrated into every part of the country and into every stratum of society whither vanity has penetrated (and into what conditions of time and circumstance does this wretched inclination not penetrate?): among merchants, among officials, scribes, and officers, into Sarátov, into Mamadýshi, into Vínnitsy, everywhere where people live. And since there were many people in Sevastopol, consequently there was also much vanity, that is, there were many *aristocrats*, in spite of the fact that at any moment death was hanging over the head of every *aristocrat* and of every *plebeian*.

To Captain Obzhógov, Staff-Captain Mikháylov was an *aristocrat;* to Staff-Captain Mikháylov, Adjutant Kalúgin was an *aristocrat*, because he was an adjutant and on "thou" terms with another adjutant. To Adjutant Kalúgin, Count Nórdov was an *aristocrat*, because he was an aid-de-camp.

Vanity, vanity, and vanity everywhere, even on the

brink of the grave, and among people ready to die from deep conviction. Vanity! It must be a characteristic trait and peculiar disease of our century. Why was nothing heard of this passion among men of former days, as one hears of the smallpox and of the cholera? Why are there only three kinds of people in our age: those who accept the principle of vanity as a necessary, consequently as a just, fact, and who freely submit to it; those who accept it as an unfortunate, but insurmountable, condition; and those, again, who act unconsciously and servilely under its influence? Why did Homer and Shakespeare speak of love, of glory, of suffering, while the literature of our age is only an endless story of snobs and vanity?

The staff-captain walked twice in indecision past the circle of his *aristocrats;* the third time he made an effort over himself, and went up to them. This circle was composed of four officers: of Adjutant Kalúgin, Mikháylov's acquaintance, of Adjutant Prince Gáltsin, who really was something of an aristocrat as compared with Kalúgin, of Colonel Neférdov, one of the so-called 122 society men (who had entered the service for this campaign from the retired list), and of Captain of Horse Praskúkhin, also one of those 122. Fortunately for Mikháylov, Kalúgin was in an excellent frame of mind (the general had just had a very confidential talk with him, and Prince Gáltsin, who had arrived from St. Petersburg, was stopping with him); he did not regard it as beneath his dignity to extend his hand to Staff-Captain Mikháylov, a thing which, however, Praskúkhin could not make up his mind to do, although he had frequently met Mikháylov in the bastion, had again and again drunk his wine and brandy, and even owed him twelve roubles and a half at cards. As he did not yet know Prince Gáltsin very intimately, he did not wish to betray to him his acquaintance with a simple staff-captain of the infantry. He bowed slightly to him.

"Well, captain," said Kalúgin, "when shall we go again to the little bastion? Do you remember how we met on the Schwartz redoubt? It was hot there, wasn't it?"

"Yes, it was," said Mikháylov, recalling how on that night, as he was making his way along the trench up to the bastion, he had met Kalúgin, who was walking along in a dashing manner, briskly clanking his sabre.

"By rights, I ought to go there to-morrow; but we have a sick man," continued Mikháylov, "an officer, and so — "

He was on the point of telling that it was not his turn, but that the commander of the eighth company was ill, and that, as there was but the ensign left in the company, he had considered it his duty to propose himself in place of Lieutenant Nepshisétski, and that therefore he was going to the bastion to-day. Kalúgin was not listening to him.

"I feel that something will happen soon," said he to Prince Gáltsin.

"And won't anything happen to-day?" timidly asked Mikháylov, glancing now at Kalúgin, and now at Gáltsin.

Nobody replied. Prince Gáltsin only frowned, stared past his cap, and, after a moment's silence, asked:

"She is a fine girl, the one in the red kerchief. Do you not know her, captain?"

"She lives near my quarters, and is a sailor's daughter," replied the staff-captain.

"Come, let us get a good look at her!"

Prince Gáltsin took, on one side, Kalúgin's arm, and on the other, the staff-captain's, being convinced in advance that this must necessarily afford great pleasure to the latter, which, indeed, was true enough.

The staff-captain was superstitious, and regarded it as a great sin to busy himself with women before an action; but on this occasion he feigned to be a libertine, which

Prince Gáltsin and Kalúgin obviously did not believe, and which extremely surprised the maiden in the red kerchief, who had noticed more than once that the captain blushed whenever he passed by her window. Praskúkhin followed them from behind and kept nudging the arm of Prince Gáltsin, making all kinds of remarks in French. As it was not possible for four persons to walk abreast on the narrow path, he was compelled to walk by himself; only, when making the second circuit, he linked his arm with a well-known, brave naval officer, Servyágin, who had come up to speak with him, and who was also anxious to join the circle of the *aristocrats*. The famous hero was delighted to put his muscular, honest hand through the arm of Praskúkhin, who was known to everybody, and to Servyágin himself, as a not very decent kind of man. When Praskúkhin, explaining to Prince Gáltsin his acquaintance with *that* sailor, whispered to him that he was a famous hero, Prince Gáltsin, who had been in the fourth bastion the day before and had seen a bomb explode within twenty paces of him, did not pay the least attention to Servyágin, on the ground that he himself was a not less brave fellow than that gentleman, and because he surmised that very many reputations were not merited.

It gave Staff-Captain Mikháylov such pleasure to promenade in this company, that he forgot his *dear* letter from T——, and the gloomy thoughts that had assailed him before his departure to the bastion. He stayed with them until they began to converse exclusively among themselves, and evade his glances, by which they meant to let him know that he could leave; finally they walked altogether away from him. But the staff-captain was, nevertheless, contented, and, when he passed by Yunker Baron Pest, who had been uncommonly proud and self-confident ever since the previous night, when he had for the first time passed a night in the blindage of the fifth bastion, and

who, in consequence of this, regarded himself as a hero, he was not in the least mortified by the suspiciously supercilious expression with which the yunker straightened himself out and took off his cap to him.

IV.

No sooner had the staff-captain crossed the threshold of his lodgings, than entirely different thoughts entered his mind. He saw his small room, with its uneven earth floor and crooked windows pasted over with paper, his old bed, with a rug nailed to the wall above it, on which an amazon was represented, and where two Túla pistols were hanging, and the dirty bed, with the chintz coverlet, of the yunker who was living with him; he saw his Nikíta, with dishevelled, greasy hair, who, scratching himself, rose from the floor; he saw his old overcoat, his boots, and a bundle, from which protruded the point of a cheese and the neck of a wine bottle filled with brandy, gotten ready for him for the bastion, — and he suddenly recalled that he was to pass the whole night with his company in the lodgments.

"I shall certainly be killed to-night," thought the staff-captain, "I feel it. The main thing is that it was not my turn to go, and I offered myself. It is always the man who obtrudes who is killed. And what is it that ails that accursed Nepshisétski? It is very likely he is not ill at all, and here another man will be killed in his place, he certainly will be. However, if I am not killed, I shall by all means be recommended for promotion. I noticed how the commander of the regiment was pleased when he heard me say: 'Permit me to go, if Lieutenant Nepshisétski is ill.' If it does not bring me a majorship, I cannot fail getting a Cross of St. Vladímir.

"This is the thirteenth time I have gone to the bastion. Oh, thirteen is a bad number. I am sure I shall be

killed, I feel I shall be! but somebody had to go, and the company could not be sent out with the ensign. If something happened, the honour of the regiment, the honour of the army, would be involved. It was my duty to go — yes, my sacred duty. Still, I have a presentiment."

The staff-captain forgot that a similar presentiment, in a greater or lesser degree, had assailed him before when he had to go to the bastion, and he did not know that the same more or less strong presentiment was experienced by everybody who went into action. After having calmed himself with the conception of duty, which was especially developed and strong in the staff-captain, he sat down at the table, and began to write his farewell letter to his father. Ten minutes later, after he had written the letter, he rose from the table, with eyes wet with tears, and, saying mentally all the prayers which he knew, he began to dress himself. His tipsy, coarse servant lazily handed him his new coat (the old one, which the staff-captain put on whenever he went to the bastion, was not mended).

"Why is not the coat mended? All you care for is sleeping, lazybones!" angrily said Mikháylov.

"Sleeping?" growled Nikíta. "I am doing nothing but running around the whole day like a dog; I am all worn out, and then I may not even sleep?"

"You are drunk again, I see!"

"I did not get drunk on your money, so why do you reproach me?"

"Shut up, blockhead!" cried the staff-captain, ready to strike him; if he was out of humour before, he now completely lost his patience and felt mortified by the coarseness of Nikíta, whom he liked and even pampered, and with whom he had been living for twelve years.

"Blockhead? Blockhead?" repeated the servant. "Why do you call me such a name, sir? Think what is before you! It is not right to curse!"

Mikháylov recalled whither he was to go soon, and he felt ashamed of himself.

"Whom would you not make lose his patience, Nikíta?" he said, in a meek voice. "Leave this letter to father on the table, — don't touch it!" he added, blushing.

"As you command, sir," said Nikíta, becoming sentimental under the influence of the wine which he had drunk, as he said, on his own money, and winking his eyes, in an obvious desire to burst out into tears.

When the staff-captain said on the steps, "Good-bye, Nikíta!" the latter suddenly exploded in forced sobs, and darted forward to kiss the hands of his master. "Good-bye, master!" he said, blubbering. An old sailor woman, who was standing on the porch, being a woman, could not keep from joining this sentimental scene, began to wipe her eyes with her dirty sleeve and to say something about gentlemen even having to suffer all kinds of torments, and that she, poor creature, was left a widow, and began for the hundredth time to tell drunken Nikíta her woe: how her husband was killed in the first bombardment, how her cottage was laid in ruins (the one she was now living in did not belong to her), and so forth. After his master's departure, Nikíta lighted a pipe, asked the landlady's daughter to go for some brandy, and at once stopped weeping; on the contrary, he exchanged some angry words with the old woman for a little pail which, so he claimed, she had smashed.

"And, maybe, I shall only be wounded," the staff-captain reflected, as he was approaching the bastion with his company, in the twilight. "Where will it be? How? Here or here?" he said to himself mentally, pointing to his abdomen and to his chest. "If it should be here," he thought of the upper part of his leg, "it might go all round. But if here, and with a splinter at that, — that will be the end!"

The staff-captain walked along the trenches and reached

the lodgments in safety; in conjunction with an officer of sappers he set the men to work, though the darkness was complete, and sat down in a small pit beneath the breastwork. There was little firing. Occasionally there was a flash of fire, now on our side, now on *his*, and the burning fuse of a bomb described a fiery arc on the dark, starry heaven. But all the bombs lodged far behind and to the right of the entrenchment, in the pit of which the staff-captain was sitting. He took a drink of brandy, ate a piece of cheese, lighted his cigarette, and, having said his prayers, wanted to take a nap.

V.

PRINCE GÁLTSIN, Lieutenant-Colonel Neférdov, and Praskúkhin, whom no one had invited, with whom no one spoke, but who did not leave them, went from the boulevard to Kalúgin's to drink tea.

"Well, you did not finish the story about Váska Méndel," said Kalúgin, who, having taken off his overcoat, sat down near the window in a soft easy chair, and unbuttoned the collar of his clean, starched linen shirt. "How did he get married?"

"It is killing, friend! *Je vous dis, il y avait un temps on ne parlait que de ça à Pétersbourg,*" said Prince Gáltsin, smiling; he leaped up from his seat near the piano, and seated himself on the window near Kalúgin. "It is simply killing. I know all the details —"

And he began gaily, cleverly, and briskly to tell a love-story, which we will leave untold, because it does not interest us. It is, however, a remarkable fact that not only Prince Gáltsin, but all the gentlemen, of whom one took up his position on the window, another stretched his legs, and a third sat down at the piano, seemed to be different men from what they had been in the boulevard: there was nothing of that ridiculous conceit and haughtiness which they displayed before the officers of infantry; here among their own, they were, especially Kalúgin and Prince Gáltsin, quite natural, and agreeable, merry, and good fellows. The conversation turned on their St. Petersburg fellow officers and acquaintances.

"What of Maslóvski?"

"Which? The uhlan of the body-guard, or of the horse-guard?"

"I know both of them. The one of the horse-guard was a boy in my days, just out of school. What is the elder one now? A captain of cavalry?"

"Yes, long ago."

"And is he still keeping his gipsy maid?"

"No, he has given her up —" and so forth, in the same strain.

Then Prince Gáltsin sat down at the piano, and sang a gipsy song superbly. Praskúkhin, without being asked by any one to do so, began to accompany him, and he did it so well that he was asked to continue singing second, which gave him much pleasure.

A servant came in with tea, cream, and cracknels on a silver tray.

"Serve the prince!" said Kalúgin.

"Really, it is strange, when you come to think of it," said Gáltsin, taking a glass, and walking to the window. "Here we are in a besieged city: piano, tea with cream, and such quarters as, truly, I should like to have in St. Petersburg."

"If it were not for this," said the old lieutenant-colonel, who was dissatisfied with everything, "this eternal expectation of something would be insufferable — to see men killed day after day — and no end to it — and to live in mud and have no comforts."

"And how is it with our infantry officers," said Kalúgin, "who are living with their soldiers in the bastions and in the blindage, and who eat the soldiers' beet soup — how is it with them?"

"How is it with them? Though they do not change their linen for ten days at a time, they are heroes, and wonderful men."

Just then an infantry officer entered the room.

"I — I was ordered — may I report to Gen — to his

Excellency from General N——?" he asked, with a timid bow.

Kalúgin rose, but, without returning the officer's salute, with offensive politeness and a strained, official smile, asked the officer whether it would not please them to wait and, without asking him to be seated, and paying no further attention to him, turned to Gáltsin and began to speak to him in French, so that the poor officer, who was standing in the middle of the room, was absolutely at a loss what to do with himself.

"A very pressing affair," said the officer, after a moment's silence.

"Ah! then please come!" said Kalúgin, putting on his overcoat, and taking the officer to the door.

"*Eh bien, messieurs, je crois, que cela chauffera cette nuit*," said Kalúgin, coming back from the general's.

"What? What is it? A sortie?" they all began to ask.

"I do not know. You will find out yourselves," said Kalúgin, with a mysterious smile.

"My commander is in the bastion, consequently I ought to go there myself," said Praskúkhin, buckling on his sabre.

But nobody replied to him; he ought to have known himself whether he was to go there, or not.

Praskúkhin and Neférdov went out, in order to betake themselves to their places. "Good-bye, gentlemen!" "*Au revoir*, gentlemen! We shall see each other to-night!" cried Kalúgin through the window, as Praskúkhin and Neférdov, leaning on the bows of their Cossack saddles, galloped down the street.

"*Non, dites moi, est-ce qu'il y aura veritablement quelque chose cette nuit?*" said Gáltsin, lying with Kalúgin on the window, and looking at the bombs which were rising above the bastions.

"I may tell you, you see — you have been in the bas-

tions, have you not?" (Gáltsin made a sign of affirmation though he had been but once in the fourth bastion.) "Opposite our lunette was a trench," and Kalúgin, not being a specialist, but still regarding his military reflections as quite correct, began, somewhat confusedly, and distorting the fortification terminology, to tell about the position of our works and about that of the enemy's and about the plan of the impending engagement.

"I declare, they are beginning to crack a little near the lodgments. Oh! is this ours or his? There it bursts," they said, lying in the window, looking at the fiery paths of the bombs crossing each other in the air, at the flashes of the volleys, which for a moment illuminated the dark blue sky, and at the white powder smoke, and listening to the ever increasing sounds of the reports.

"*Quel charmant coup d'œil!* eh?" said Kalúgin, directing his guest's attention to this really beautiful spectacle. "Do you know, at times it is not possible to distinguish a bomb from a star."

"Yes, I just now thought it was a star; but it began to settle, — there it has burst. And that big star over there, what do you call it? It is just like a bomb."

"Do you know, I am so accustomed to these bombs that I am quite sure that in Russia all these will seem to me, in a starry night, to be bombs. One gets so used to things."

"I wonder whether I had not better go to this sortie," said Prince Gáltsin, after a moment of silence.

"Don't say that, friend! Don't even think of it! I won't let you go anyway," answered Kalúgin. "You have time yet, friend!"

"Seriously? So you think that I ought not to go? Eh?"

At this time, a terrible cracking of muskets was heard immediately after the artillery roar, in the direction where these gentlemen were looking, and thousands

of small lights uninterruptedly flashed and gleamed all along the line.

"That's it, the real thing!" said Kalúgin. "I cannot hear with equanimity this musketry-fire; you know, it just gripes my soul. There is a hurrah!" he added, listening attentively to the distant drawling roar of hundreds of voices, "ah-ah-ah," which was borne to him from the bastion.

"Whose hurrah is this, theirs or ours?"

"I do not know; it has now come to a hand-to-hand fight, for the firing has stopped."

At that moment, an officer with a Cossack rode up to the porch beneath the window, and leaped from his horse.

"From where?"

"From the bastion. I must see the general."

"Come on. Well, what is it?"

"They attacked the lodgments — took them — The French brought up immense reserves — attacked ours — there were only two battalions," said, out of breath, the very officer who had come in the evening, with difficulty drawing his breath, but walking toward the door with perfect ease.

"Well, did they retreat?" asked Gáltsin.

"No!" angrily replied the officer. "The battalion came up in time, they were repulsed; but the commander of the regiment was killed, and many officers, and I am ordered to ask for reinforcements."

With these words he went with Kalúgin to the general's, whither we shall not follow him.

Five minutes later, Kalúgin was seated on a Cossack horse (again in that peculiar quasi-Cossack pose, which, so I have observed, all the adjutants, for some reason or other, find especially agreeable), galloped away to the bastion, in order to transmit there certain orders, and to wait for some news of the result of the engagement. Prince Gáltsin, under the influence of that strong agita-

tion which the signs of an impending engagement produce on a spectator who does not take part in it, went out into the street, and began aimlessly to pace up and down.

VI.

SOLDIERS were carrying the wounded on stretchers and leading them by their arms. The street was completely dark; only here and there lights glimmered in the windows of the hospital or of the quarters of officers sitting up late. From the bastions was borne the same roar of ordnance and of musketry cross-fires, and the same lights flashed against the black heaven. Occasionally could be heard the tramp of the horse of an orderly galloping past, the groan of a wounded soldier, the steps and conversation of the bearers, or a feminine voice of some frightened inhabitant who had gone out on the porch to take a look at the cannonade.

Among the latter was also our acquaintance Nikíta, the old sailor woman, with whom he had in the meantime made peace, and her ten-year-old daughter.

"O Lord, and most holy Virgin!" the old woman said to herself, with a sigh, looking at the bombs which incessantly flew from one side to the other, like balls of fire. "Awful, just awful! Oho! There was nothing like this in the first *bardment*. You see where the accursed one has burst? Right over our house in the village."

"No, that is farther away. They all fall into Aunt Arinka's garden," said the girl.

"And where, oh, where is now my master?" said Nikíta, in a chanting voice, and still a little drunk. "How I do love this master of mine! I love him so that if — God forfend it! — he should be killed in the accursed action, I do not know what I should do with myself,

truly, aunty, upon my word! Just let me tell you there is no master like him! He is not to be mistaken for one of those that play cards here! What are they? Pshaw! In short —" concluded Nikíta, pointing to the lighted window of his master's room, where Yunker Zhvadchéski had invited, in the absence of the staff-captain, some guests for a carousal, in celebration of the cross which he had received; these were Sub-Lieutenant Ugróvich and Sub-Lieutenant Nepshisétski, who was suffering from catarrh.

"The little stars, the little stars keep a-rolling!" the girl, gazing at the sky, broke the silence which followed after Nikíta's words. "There, there another has come down. What is that for, mamma?"

"They will entirely demolish our cottage," said the old woman, sighing, without replying to her daughter's question.

"When we went there to-day with uncle, mamma," continued the girl, in a singsong, "such an awful cannon-ball was lying in the very room near the safe; it must have gone through the vestibule, and have flown into the room — such an awfully big one that you could not lift it."

"Whoever had a husband and money, has left," said the old woman, "but there, they have ruined the last little cottage I had. You see, you see how he is firing, that rascal! Lord, Lord!"

"And as we were coming out, one bomb came a-flying and it burst, and it scattered the dirt, and it almost struck uncle and me with a splinter."

VII.

PRINCE GÁLTSIN kept coming across more and more wounded soldiers on stretchers and afoot, supporting each other, and speaking loudly among themselves.

"How they did jump, my friends!" said, in a bass, a tall soldier, carrying two guns on his back. "How they jumped and cried '*Allah! Allah!*'[1] and began to crawl over each other. You kill some, and others come in their place, — there is nothing to be done. An endless — "

But at this point Gáltsin stopped him.

"Are you from the bastion?"

"Yes, your Honour!"

"Well, what has happened there? Tell me!"

"What has happened? A might of them made the advance, your Honour, and they climbed the rampart, and that's all. We have succumbed entirely, your Honour!"

"How succumbed? Did you not repel them?"

"How could we repel them, when his whole might came up against us? They have disabled us all, and we are getting no reinforcements."

The soldier was mistaken, because the trenches were in our possession; but this is a peculiarity commonly observed: a soldier who is wounded in an action always considers it lost and dreadfully sanguinary.

"How is it, I was told they were beaten off?" Gáltsin

[1] Having fought with the Turks, our soldiers had become so accustomed to this cry of the enemy, that they ascribed it also to the French. — *Author's note.*

said, with mortification. "Maybe they were beaten off after you left? How long ago did you leave?"

"Just lately, your Honour!" answered the soldier. "I doubt it. The trenches must all be on his side — we have completely succumbed."

"Well, how is it you are not ashamed? To give up the trenches! This is terrible!" said Gáltsin, saddened by this indifference.

"What was to be done? There was such a might!" grumbled the soldier.

"Oh, your Honour!" suddenly said a soldier on a stretcher which came alongside them. "How could we help giving them up, when nearly all of us have been disabled? If we had had the proper forces, we would not have given them up in a lifetime. But what was to be done? I stabbed one, and then it struck me here — Oh, easier, friends, steadily, friends, walk more steadily! Oh, oh, oh!" groaned the wounded man.

"Indeed, there seems to be too large a crowd coming back," said Gáltsin, again stopping the tall soldier with the two guns. "What are you going for? Oh, there, stop!"

The soldier stopped, and with his left hand raised his cap.

"Whither are you going, and for what?" he cried, sternly, to him. "Good-for —"

But, walking up close to the soldier, he noticed that his right arm was bare above the elbow, and blood-stained.

"Wounded, your Honour!"

"How wounded?"

"Here, I suppose, by a bullet," said the soldier, pointing to the arm. "I can't tell what it was that knocked me in the head," and, bending down, he showed his blood-stained and matted hair on the back of his head.

"Whose is the second gun?"

"A French carbine, your Honour! I took it away. Indeed, I should not have come away, if I did not have to accompany this soldier; he might fall by himself," he added, pointing to a soldier who was walking a little ahead of them, leaning on his gun, and with difficulty dragging along and moving his left leg.

Prince Gáltsin suddenly felt dreadfully ashamed for his unjust suspicions. He was conscious of blushing; he turned his face away, and, without asking anything else of the wounded, or observing them, he walked to the ambulance hall.

Having with difficulty made his way on the porch, between wounded soldiers on foot and the bearers of stretchers, who went in with the wounded and came out with the dead, Gáltsin went into the first room, cast a glance about him, and at once involuntarily turned around, and ran out into the street. It was too terrible!

VIII.

THE large, high, dark hall, illuminated only by four or five candles, with which the surgeons went up to examine the wounded, was literally full. The bearers continually brought in wounded soldiers, placed them close to each other on the floor, which was already so crowded that the unfortunates were pressed together and soaked in the blood of each other, and went out for other men. The puddles of blood, which could be seen in unoccupied spots, the feverish breaths of several hundred men, and the exhalations of the men busy about the stretchers produced a peculiar, oppressive, dense, noisome stench, in which the candles in the different corners of the room flickered gloomily. The sounds of various groans, sighs, and snoring, interrupted now and then by a penetrating cry, hovered in the air. The Sisters of Mercy, with calm faces and with an expression not only of mere feminine, sickly, lachrymose compassion, but of active, practical sympathy, stepping here and there over the wounded, with medicaments, with water, bandages, and lint, flitted between the blood-stained overcoats and shirts. The surgeons, with rolled-up sleeves, kneeling before the wounded, near whom the assistants held the candles, examined, felt, and probed the wounds, in spite of the terrible groans and entreaties of the sufferers. One doctor was seated at a table near the door, and just as Gáltsin entered the hall, he marked down No. 532.

"Iván Bogáev, private of the third company of the S. regiment, *Fractura femuris complicata!*" cried another,

from the end of the hall, feeling the shattered leg. "Turn him around!"

"Oh, oh, fathers, my fathers!" cried the soldier, entreating them not to touch him.

"*Perforatio capitis.*"

"Semén Nefrédov, lieutenant-colonel of the N—— regiment of infantry. You must be patient a little, colonel, or else I can't do anything. I will give you up," said a third, rummaging with a hook in the brain of the unfortunate lieutenant-colonel.

"Oh, it is not necessary! Oh, for the Lord's sake, hurry up, hurry up, for the — ah-ah-ah!"

"*Perforatio pectoris* — Sevastyán Seredá, private — of what regiment? However, don't write down, *moritur*. Take him away," said the doctor, walking away from the soldier, who was rolling his eyes, and having the rattle in his throat.

About forty soldiers of the ambulance, waiting for the loads of the dressed to be taken to the hospital, and of the dead to the chapel, were standing at the door, and, silently, now and then sighing, were looking at this spectacle.

IX.

On his way to the bastion, Kalúgin met many wounded soldiers. Knowing from experience how badly such a spectacle affects in an engagement a man's spirit, he not only did not stop to question them, but, on the contrary, endeavoured not to pay the least attention to them. At the foot of the hill he came across an orderly, who was galloping at full speed from the bastion.

"Zóbkin, Zóbkin! Stop a minute!"

"Well, what is it?"

"Where do you come from?"

"From the lodgments."

"Well, how is it there? hot?"

"Oh, terrible!"

And the orderly galloped away.

Indeed, although there were few volleys of musketry, the cannonade began with renewed vim and fury.

"Oh, it is bad!" thought Kalúgin, experiencing a certain disagreeable sensation, and he, too, had a presentiment, that is, a very common thought, — the thought of death. But Kalúgin was egoistical and endowed with wooden nerves, in short, he was what is called brave. He did not succumb to his first sentiment, and began to encourage himself; he thought of a certain adjutant, of Napoleon's, I think, who, having transmitted his orders, galloped up at full speed to Napoleon, with bleeding head.

"*Vous êtes blessé!*" said Napoleon to him. "*Je vous demande pardon, sire, je suis mort,*" and the adjutant fell down from his horse, and expired on the spot.

This incident seemed very nice to him, and he imagined himself a little that adjutant; then he struck his horse with the whip, and assumed a still more dashing Cossack attitude, looked back at the Cossack, who, standing in his stirrups, was galloping behind him, and arrived as a valiant soldier at the place where he had to dismount from his horse. Here he found four soldiers, who were sitting on some stones, and smoking their pipes.

"What are you doing here?" he shouted to them.

"We have taken away a wounded man, your Honour, and so we are taking a little rest," answered one of them, hiding his pipe behind his back, and doffing his cap.

"Taking a rest, eh? March to your places!"

He walked with them along the trench, up the hill, meeting wounded soldiers at every step. When he had reached the top, he turned to the left, and, having taken a few steps in that direction, suddenly found himself alone. A splinter whizzed by close to him, and struck into the trench. Another bomb rose in front of him, and, it seemed, was flying straight upon him. All at once he felt terribly: he raced forward about five steps, and lay down flat on the ground. When the bomb exploded some distance away from him, he was dreadfully mortified, and he got up and looked around, to see whether anybody had noticed his fall; but nobody was near.

When terror once enters your soul, it does not easily give way to another sensation. Having always boasted of never bending, he now walked up the trench with hurried step, and almost in a creeping posture. "Ah, it is bad!" he thought, stumbling, "I shall certainly be killed," and, feeling how heavily he was breathing, and how the perspiration stood out on his whole body, he was amazed at himself, but no longer tried to overcome his feeling.

Suddenly somebody's steps were heard in front of him. He immediately straightened up, raised his head, and, briskly clanking his sabre, went ahead with less hurried

step. He did not recognize himself. When he came upon an officer of sappers and a sailor, who were walking toward him, and the first called out to him, "Lie down!" pointing to the bright point of a bomb, which, approaching brighter and brighter, and faster and faster, struck the ground near the trench, he involuntarily bent his head a little, under the influence of the terrified voice, and walked on.

"What a brave fellow!" said the sailor, who was calmly watching the falling bomb, and with an experienced eye at once figured out that its splinters could not reach the trench. "He does not even want to lie down."

There were but a few paces left for Kalúgin to make across the small square, up to the blindage of the commander of the bastion, when he was again overcome by darkness and a foolish terror; his heart beat more strongly, the blood rushed to his head, and he had to exert an effort over himself, in order to run as far as the blindage.

"Why are you so out of breath?" said the general, when he communicated the orders to him.

"I was walking very fast, your Excellency!"

"Don't you want a glass of wine?"

Kalúgin drank a glass of wine, and lighted a cigarette. The engagement was over; only a heavy cannonade was kept up on both sides. In the blindage sat General N——, the commander of the bastion, and some six other officers, among whom was also Praskúkhin, and they were discussing various details of the action. Sitting in this cosy room, with its blue wall-paper, with a divan, a bed, a table, on which lay papers, with a clock and an image, before which a lamp was burning; looking at these signs of life, and at the huge yard beams, of which the ceiling was formed; and listening to the cannonading, which in the blindage appeared feeble, Kalúgin absolutely could not comprehend how it was he had allowed himself twice to be overcome by such an unpardonable weakness. He

was angry with himself, and he was anxious for some danger, in order to test himself.

"I am glad you are here, captain," he said to a naval officer, in the overcoat of an officer of the staff, with long moustache and the Cross of St. George, who had just entered into the blindage, to ask the general for some workmen to mend in his battery two embrasures which had caved in. "The general has ordered me to find out," continued Kalúgin, when the commander of the battery was through with the general, "whether your ordnance can discharge canister-shot along the trench?"

"Only one gun will do it," the captain replied, gloomily.

"Still, let us go and look."

The captain frowned, and angrily cleared his throat.

"I have been standing there all night, and have come away to take a little rest," he said. "Can't you go down yourself? My assistant, Lieutenant Karts, is there, and he will show you around."

The captain had for six months commanded this, one of the most perilous batteries, and had passed his time uninterruptedly in the bastion, ever since the beginning of the siege, when as yet there were no blindages, and he had among sailors a reputation for bravery. Consequently his refusal startled and surprised Kalúgin. "A fine reputation!" he thought.

"Well, then I will go by myself, if you will permit," he said, in a slightly derisive tone, to the captain, who, however, did not pay the least attention to his words.

Kalúgin did not consider that he had at different times, taken all together, passed fifty hours in the bastions, whereas the captain had lived there for six months. Kalúgin was urged on by vanity, by the desire to shine, by the hope of earning a reward and a reputation, and by the charm of the risk, while the captain had long passed through all that: at first he had been vain, had done daring deeds, courted danger, hoped for rewards and for

a reputation, and even had obtained them, but now all these impelling causes had lost their power with him, and he looked at matters quite differently. He promptly executed his duties, but comprehending well how very few chances of life there were left for him, after six months in the bastion, he no longer risked these chances without imperative necessity, so that the young lieutenant, who had joined the battery about a week ago, and who now was showing Kalúgin around, unnecessarily vying with him in thrusting his head forward through the embrasures and walking out on the banquettes, seemed ten times more brave than the captain.

Having inspected the battery, Kalúgin, on his way back to the blindage, stumbled in the darkness on the general, who with his orderlies was going to the watch-tower.

"Captain Praskúkhin!" said the general, "please go down to the right lodgment, and tell the second battalion of the M—— regiment, who are working there, to leave the work, and to walk away noiselessly and join their regiment, which is standing in reserve at the foot of the hill— You understand? Take them yourself down to the regiment."

"Yes, sir!"

Praskúkhin ran at full gallop to the lodgment.

The firing was growing less frequent.

X.

"Is this the second battalion of the M—— regiment?" asked Praskúkhin, having reached the place, and stumbling against soldiers who were carrying dirt in bags.

"Yes, sir."

"Where is the commander?"

Surmising that the commander of the company was wanted, Mikháylov crawled out of his pit, and, taking Praskúkhin for the chief, he went up to him, with his hand at his visor.

"The general has commanded — you — please go — as fast as possible — and, above all, softly — back — no, not back, but to the reserve," said Praskúkhin, looking askance in the direction of the enemy's fires.

Having recognized Praskúkhin, dropping his hand, and having grasped the whole matter, Mikháylov gave the order, and the soldiers of the battalion began to stir, to pick up their muskets, to put on their overcoats, and to move.

He who has not experienced it cannot form an idea of the pleasure which a man feels when he leaves, after three hours of bombardment, such a perilous place as the lodgments. In these three hours Mikháylov had more than once, not without reason, regarded his end as inevitable, and he had become accustomed to his conviction that he should certainly be killed, and that he no longer belonged to this world. And yet it cost him a great effort to keep his legs from running, when he left the lodgments at the head of his company, abreast with Praskúkhin.

"Good-bye!" said to him a major, the commander of another battalion that was to remain in the lodgments, and with whom he had shared the cheese, while sitting in the pit, near the breastworks. "I wish you a happy journey!"

"And I wish you luck in your position. It seems, it has quieted down now."

But no sooner had he said this than the enemy, evidently having noticed the motion in the lodgments, began to fire oftener and oftener. Our men began to return the fire, and a furious cannonading began once more. The stars were shining high, but not brilliantly. The night was pitch-dark; only the flashes from the volleys and the exploding bombs momentarily lighted up things. The soldiers walked fast in silence, and involuntarily raced with each other; between the uninterrupted peals of the cannonade nothing was heard but the even sound of the steps on the dry road, the clattering of the bayonets, or the sigh and prayer of some soldier, "O Lord, O Lord, what is this?" Now and then could be heard the groan of a wounded man, and the cries, "The stretcher!" (In the company which Mikháylov commanded, twenty-six men were put out of action by one artillery fire.) There was a flash on the distant gloomy horizon, the sentry cried from the bastion, "Can-non!" and a ball, whizzing above the company, tore up the ground and scattered stones.

"The devil take it! How slowly they are walking," thought Praskúkhin, continually looking back, as he walked at Mikháylov's side. "Truly, I had better run ahead. I have transmitted the order — Still, no; they might later say that I am a coward! Come what may, I will walk with them."

"Why does he keep at my side?" thought Mikháylov, for his part. "So far as I have observed, he always brings misfortune. There it flies, straight upon us, it seems."

Having made a few hundred steps, they stumbled on

Kalúgin, who, briskly clattering his sabre, was walking to the lodgments, in order to find out, by the general's command, how the works were proceeding there. But, when he met Mikháylov, he thought that, rather than go himself under this terrible fire, which, besides, he had not been ordered to do, he would get the details from an officer who had been there. Indeed, Mikháylov told him everything about the works. Having walked a short distance with him, Kalúgin turned into the trench which led to the blindage.

"Well, what is the news?" asked an officer who was sitting all alone in the room, at supper.

"Nothing. It seems, there will be no further engagement."

"How not? On the contrary, the general has just gone once more to the watch-tower. Another regiment has come. There it is — you hear? Again the musketry fire. Don't go. Why should you?" added the officer, noticing the motion which Kalúgin had made.

"By rights I ought certainly to be there," thought Kalúgin, "but I have to-day exposed myself enough to danger; it is a terrible fire."

"That's so, I will wait for them here," he said.

And, indeed, some twenty minutes later the general returned with the officers who were about him; among them was also Yunker Baron Pest, but not Praskúkhin. The attack had been repulsed, and the lodgments were occupied by us.

Having received the exact information, Kalúgin walked away with Pest from the blindage.

XI.

"YOUR overcoat is bloody; have you really taken part in the hand-to-hand fight?" Kalúgin asked him.

"Oh, it is terrible! Just imagine —"

And Pest began to tell how he had led his company, how the commander of the company had been killed, how he had stabbed a Frenchman, and how the affair would have been lost, if it had not been for him.

The foundation for the story, that the commander of the company had been killed, and that Pest himself had killed a Frenchman, was true; but, in giving the details, the yunker was drawing on his imagination and bragging.

He was involuntarily bragging, because during the whole action he was moving in such a mist and oblivion that everything which had occurred seemed to him to have occurred somewhere, at some time, and with somebody. He very naturally tried to reconstruct these details advantageously to himself. This is the way it really happened:

The battalion to which the yunker had been detailed for the sortie had been for a couple of hours under fire near a wall; then the commander of the battalion in front said something, — the commanders of the companies began to stir, the battalion moved, emerged from behind the breastworks, and, having walked about one hundred paces, stopped, and drew up in company columns. Pest was ordered to take up a position on the right flank of the second company.

Without being able to give himself an account where

he was, or why, the yunker took up his position, and, with bated breath and with a cold chill running down his spine, unconsciously gazed into the distance ahead of him, expecting something terrible to happen. However, he did not feel so frightened, for there was no firing then, but he felt strange and queer, when he reflected that he was outside the fortress, in the field. Again the commander of the battalion in front said something. Again the officers uttered something in whispers, as they communicated their orders, and the black wall of the first company suddenly crouched. The order was given to lie down flat. The second company, too, lay down, and Pest, in getting down, pricked his hand against some thorny plant. The commander of the second company was the only one who did not lie down. His short figure, with the unsheathed sword, which he kept waving, moved up and down in front of the company, talking all the time.

"Boys! Show yourselves brave fellows, I tell you! Don't fire your guns, but run the canaille down with your bayonets! When I shout 'Hurrah!' you after me, and no standing back — The main thing is — all as one — we will give a good account of ourselves, we won't bungle! Hey, boys? For the Tsar, our father!"

"What is the name of the commander of your company?" Pest asked a yunker who was lying abreast with him. "What a brave fellow!"

"Yes, as always before an action — " answered the yunker. "His name is Lisinkóvski."

At this moment, there was a sudden flash right in front of the company; there was a terrible roar which deafened the whole company; high up in the air stones and splinters rustled (it was at least fifty seconds later that a stone fell from above and broke a soldier's leg). It was a bomb from an elevation gun, and the fact that it struck the company proved that the French had observed the column.

"Go ahead with your bombs! Just let us get at you, and you will feel the three-edged Russian bayonet, accursed one!" cried the commander of the company, so loud that the commander of the battalion was compelled to order him to keep quiet and be less noisy.

Immediately after this, the first company rose, and then the second. They were ordered to fix their bayonets, and the battalion advanced. Pest was so terrified that he was absolutely unconscious of time and place, and of what was going on. He moved like a drunken man. Then suddenly a million fires flashed on all sides, and there was a ping and a crash. He shouted and ran somewhere, because everybody else was running and shouting. Then he stumbled and fell down on something. It was the commander of the company, who had been wounded at the head of his company, and who seized the yunker's leg, taking him for a Frenchman. Then when he had torn his leg away and had got up, a man reeled back against him and almost knocked him down once more; another man cried, "Stab him! What are you gazing at?" Somebody took the gun, and ran the bayonet through something soft. "*Ah Dieu!*" somebody cried in a terrible, penetrating voice, and it was only then that Pest comprehended that he had transfixed a Frenchman. Cold sweat stood out on his body, he shuddered, as in an ague, and he threw down the gun. But this lasted but a moment; it immediately occurred to him that he was a hero. He grasped his gun, and, crying "Hurrah!" ran with the throng away from the killed Frenchman. After running some twenty paces, he arrived at the trench. There were our men and the commander of the battalion.

"I have stabbed one!" he said to the commander of the battalion.

"You are a brave fellow, baron!"

XII.

"Do you know, Praskúkhin has been killed," said Pest, accompanying Kalúgin, who was going home.

"Impossible!"

"Most certainly. I have seen him myself."

"Good-bye! I must hurry."

"I am well satisfied," thought Kalúgin, on his way back. "For the first time a bit of luck, while I am the officer of the day. It is a fine affair! I am alive and hale; there will be a fine report, and I shall assuredly get a gold sword. And I deserve it."

Having reported to the general all that was necessary, he went to his room, to which Prince Gáltsin had returned long ago, in expectation of him; he was reading a book which he had found on Kalúgin's table.

It gave Kalúgin remarkable pleasure to feel himself at home and out of danger. Having donned his night-gown and lain down on the bed, he told Gáltsin all the particulars of the engagement, narrating them, naturally, from a point of view from which these details would prove that he, Kalúgin, was a very fine and brave officer; this, it seems to me, it was superfluous to hint at, because all knew that anyway, and had no right and no cause to doubt it, unless, perhaps, the deceased Captain Praskúkhin, who, though he had regarded it as a privilege to link arms with Kalúgin, had only the day before told a friend of his in secret that Kalúgin was a nice man, but that, between you and me, he hated dreadfully to go to the bastions.

Praskúkhin, who was walking abreast with Mikháylov, had just left Kalúgin, and was beginning to revive a little, as he approached a less dangerous spot, when he saw a flash gleaming brightly behind him, and heard the shout of the sentry, "Mortar!" and the words of one of the soldiers walking behind, "It will fly straight to the bastion!"

Mikháylov looked back. The bright point of the bomb had just stopped in his zenith, when by its position it was impossible to determine its direction. But this lasted only a moment: faster and faster, nearer and nearer, so that the sparks of the fuse could be seen and the fatal whistling could be heard, the bomb was settling down straight over the battalion.

"Lie down," cried somebody's voice.

Mikháylov and Praskúkhin lay down on the ground. Praskúkhin closed his eyes and only heard the bomb's thud against the hard earth near by. A second passed, — it seemed an hour, — and the bomb did not explode. Praskúkhin was frightened: had he been cowardly for nothing? Maybe the bomb had fallen some distance off, and he only imagined that the fuse was hissing near him. He opened his eyes, and it gave him pleasure to see Mikháylov lying near his very feet, motionless on the ground. Just then his eyes for a moment met the burning fuse of the bomb spinning around within three feet from him.

Cold terror, which excluded all other thoughts and feelings, — terror seized his whole being. He covered his face with his hands.

Another second passed, — a second during which the whole world of feeling, thoughts, hopes, and recollections flashed through his imagination.

"Whom will it kill, — me or Mikháylov? or both of us? And if me, where will it be? In the head, — then all is ended; but if in the leg, they will amputate it, and

I will insist on their giving me chloroform, and I may still live. And, maybe, it will kill only Mikháylov: then I will tell how we walked abreast, and how I was bespattered by blood, when he was killed. No, it is nearer to me — I will be the man!"

Here he thought of the twelve roubles which he was owing Mikháylov, and of another debt in St. Petersburg, which he ought to have paid long ago; the gipsy melody which he had sung the night before passed through his mind. The woman whom he had loved appeared before his imagination in a cap with lilac ribbons; he recalled a man who had insulted him five years before, and whose insult he had not yet avenged, — though inseparably from these and from a thousand other recollections, the feeling of the present, the expectation of death, did not leave him for an instant.

"Still it may not burst," he thought, and, with desperate determination, wished to open his eyes. But at this moment, even while his lids were closed, his eyes were startled by a red fire; with a terrible crash something struck his chest; he ran, tripped over his sabre, which was dangling between his legs, and fell on his side.

"Thank God! I am only contused," was his first thought, and he wanted to touch his breast with his hands; but his arms felt as though fettered, and his head was as if in a vise. In his eyes flashed the soldiers, and unconsciously he counted them: "One, two, three, soldiers; and the one with his overcoat rolled under him is an officer," he thought. Then a lightning flashed in his eyes, and he was wondering what it was they were firing, — a mortar or a cannon. Then they fired again; and there were more soldiers: five, six, seven soldiers passed by. He was suddenly horrified at the thought that they might crush him. He wanted to cry out that he was bruised; but his mouth was so parched that his tongue cleaved to the palate, and terrible thirst tormented him.

He felt that it was wet near his breast; this sensation of wetness reminded him of water, and he wanted to drink even that which caused that moisture.

"I must have abrased the flesh as I fell," he thought, and, beginning more and more to succumb to the fear that the soldiers, who continued flashing past him, would crush him, he collected all his strength, and wanted to shout, "Take me!" But instead of this he groaned so terribly that he was horrified at the sound he himself made. Then some red fires leaped in his eyes, — and he thought that the soldiers were putting rocks on him; the fires leaped about ever less frequently, and the rocks pressed him more and more. He made an effort to push aside the rocks, and he no longer saw, nor heard, nor thought, nor felt. He had been instantly killed by a splinter that had struck his chest.

XIII.

When Mikháylov saw the bomb, he fell to the ground, and in the two seconds during which the bomb lay unexploded, he, like Praskúkhin, thought and felt immeasurably much. He mentally prayed to God, and kept repeating, "Thy will be done! What made me go into military service?" and at the same time he thought: "And there I have gone over to the infantry, in order to take part in the campaign. Would it not have been better if I had remained in the regiment of uhlans in the city of T——, and passed my time with my friend Natásha? And this is what I have instead!" And he began to count: "One, two, three, four," making up his mind that if it exploded on an even number, he would live, but if on an uneven number, he would be killed. "Everything is ended; I am killed," he thought, when the bomb exploded (he forgot whether it was on an even or on an uneven number), and he felt a blow and a severe pain in his head. "O Lord, forgive me my sins!" he said, swaying his hands, and he rose, and fell down senseless on his back.

His first sensation, when he awoke, was that of blood flowing down his nose, and a pain in his head, which was growing fainter. "My soul is departing," he thought, "and what will it be there? O Lord, receive my soul in peace! But one thing is strange," he reflected; "namely, that, dying, I so clearly hear the steps of the soldiers, and the sounds of firing."

"A stretcher, ho, there, — the captain has been killed!" cried over his head a voice, which he involuntarily recognized as that of his drummer Ignátev.

Somebody took him by the shoulders. He tried to open his eyes, and saw overhead the dark-blue sky, groups of stars, and two bombs flying above him, and overtaking each other; he saw Ignátev, the soldiers with the stretcher and their guns, the rampart, the trenches, and suddenly persuaded himself that he was not yet in the other world.

He was lightly wounded in the head by a stone. His very first impression was like regret: he had so well and so calmly prepared himself for his transition to the other world, that he was unpleasantly affected by his return to reality, with its bombs, trenches, and blood; his second impression was an unconscious joy that he was alive, and his third, a desire to get away from the bastion as quickly as possible. The drummer tied his commander's head with a handkerchief, and, supporting him, led him to the ambulance.

"Whither am I going, and wherefore?" thought the staff-captain, when he had collected his senses a little. "My duty is to stay with the company, and not to go ahead, the more so since the company will soon be out of the firing line," a voice whispered to him.

"It is not necessary, my friend," he said, pulling his arm away from the obliging drummer. "I am not going to the ambulance; I will stay with the company."

And he turned back.

"Your Honour, it would be better if you had your wound dressed properly," said Ignátev. "In the heat of the moment, you may think it of no significance; and it might get worse. And this is such a hot place, — really, your Honour!"

Mikháylov hesitated for a moment, and would have followed Ignátev's advice, if he had not suddenly thought

of the many severely wounded at the ambulance. "It may be the doctors will only laugh at my scratch," thought the staff-captain, and resolutely, in spite of the drummer's persuasion, he went back to his company.

"Where is Orderly Praskúkhin, who was walking with me?" he asked the ensign who was leading the company when they met.

"I do not know — I think he was killed," the ensign replied, reluctantly.

"Killed or wounded? How is it you do not know? Was he not going with us? And why did you not take him?"

"There was no time for that, the place was so hot!"

"How could you do it, Mikhaíl Iványch?" said Mikháylov, angrily. "How could you abandon him, if he was alive; and even if he has been killed, his body ought to have been taken along."

"How can he be alive, when I tell you that I went up myself and took a look at him!" said the ensign. "Really, I am satisfied if I can get my men away. Look at the canaille! They are now discharging cannon-balls at us," he added.

Mikháylov sat down, and clasped his head, which began to pain him terribly from the motion.

"No, we ought to go down and fetch him. Maybe he is still alive," said Mikháylov. "It is our duty, Mikhaíl Iványch!"

Mikhaíl Iványch made no reply.

"He did not take him at the time, and now I must send the soldiers by themselves. But how am I to send them? Under this terrible fire they will only be uselessly killed," thought Mikháylov.

"Boys! We ought to go back, and pick up the officer who lies wounded there in the ditch," he said, neither very loudly, nor imperatively, for he felt that it would be disagreeable for the soldiers to execute this order, —

and, indeed, since he did not address any one in particular, no one stepped forward to carry it out.

"On the other hand, he may be dead, and then it is not worth while to subject my men to useless danger; I am the only one to be blamed for having neglected him. I will go there myself, and find out whether he is alive. That is my duty," said Mikháylov to himself.

"Mikhaíl Iványch! you lead the company, and I will catch up with you," he said, and, raising his overcoat with one hand, and with the other continually fingering the image of St. Mitrofáni, in whom he had special faith, he ran at full speed up the trench.

Having convinced himself that Praskúkhin was dead, Mikháylov dragged himself back, breathing heavily, and holding with his hand the loosened bandage and his head, which now began to pain him severely. The battalion was already in its place at the foot of the hill, and almost beyond the firing line, when Mikháylov caught up with them. I say, almost beyond the firing line, because now and then a stray bomb reached even this place.

"To-morrow I must go down to the ambulance to register," thought the staff-captain, while the surgeon's assistant was dressing his wound.

XIV.

HUNDREDS of blood-stained bodies of men, who two hours before had been full of all sorts of elevated and petty hopes and desires, were now lying with stark limbs on the dew-covered, blooming valley, which separated the bastion from the trench, and on the even floor of the chapel for the dead in Sevastopol; hundreds of men, with curses and prayers on their parched lips, were creeping, rolling around, and groaning, some between the corpses in the blooming valley, others on stretchers, on cots, and on the blood-stained floor of the ambulance! And just as in former days gleamed the morning glow over Mount Sapún, paled the twinkling stars, rose a white mist from the dark, roaring sea, crimsoned the dawn in the east, scudded the long purple cloudlets along the bright azure horizon, and just as in former days swam out the mighty, beautiful luminary, portending joy, love, and happiness to all living things.

XV.

On the following evening the music of the chasseurs again was playing in the boulevard, and again officers, yunkers, soldiers, and young women strolled leisurely near the pavilion, and along the lower avenues of blooming, fragrant white acacias.

Kalúgin, Prince Gáltsin, and a colonel were walking with linked arms near the pavilion, and discussing the engagement of the previous night. The guiding thread of the conversation was, as it always is in similar cases, not the engagement itself, but the part which each had taken in the engagement. Their faces and the sounds of their voices were expressive of solemnity, even sadness, as though the losses of the day before powerfully affected and grieved them; but in truth, since none of them had lost a very close friend, this expression of sadness was merely of an official nature, a something which they regarded it as their duty to evince. On the contrary, Kalúgin and the colonel would have been delighted to see such an engagement every day, if they could earn every day a gold sabre and a major-generalship, even though they were very nice people. I like to hear a conqueror, who, to satisfy his ambition, leads millions to destruction, called a monster. But get the confession of Ensign Petrushóv and of Sub-Lieutenant Antónov, and so forth; every one of them is a Napoleon in miniature, a monster in miniature, and forthwith ready to start a battle, to kill a hundred people, merely to get an additional star, or one-third additional pay.

"No, you must pardon me," said the colonel, "it began at first on the left flank. I was there."

"Perhaps," replied Kalúgin. "I was chiefly in the right flank; I went there twice: once, to find the general, and the second time, for no special reason, just to look at the lodgments. It was a hot place, I tell you."

"I am sure Kalúgin knows," Prince Gáltsin said to the colonel. "Do you know, V—— told me to-day about you. He said you were a gallant officer."

"But the losses, the losses were terrible," said the colonel. "In my regiment four hundred men were put out of action. I marvel how it is I got away from there alive."

Just then, at the other end of the boulevard and coming toward these gentlemen, appeared the form of Mikháylov with his head bandaged.

"Are you wounded, captain?" said Kalúgin.

"Yes, a little, from a stone," answered Mikháylov.

"*Est-ce que le pavillon est baissé déjà?*" asked Prince Gáltsin, glancing at the staff-captain's cap, and addressing no one in particular.

"*Non, pas encore,*" replied Mikháylov, wishing to show that he knew how to speak French.

"Are they still having a truce?" said Gáltsin, addressing him in Russian, as much as to say, so the staff-captain thought, "It will, no doubt, be hard for you to speak French, so would it not be better to talk to you simply?" And, with this, the adjutants went away from him. The staff-captain felt exceedingly lonely, just as on the day before, and, exchanging greetings with various gentlemen, — some he did not care to meet, others he could not make up his mind to approach, — sat down near the monument of Kazárski, and lighted a cigarette.

Baron Pest, too, came to the boulevard. He said that he had been present at the truce, that he had spoken with some French officers, and that one French officer had

said to him, "If it had been dark another half-hour, the lodgments would have been retaken," and that he had answered him, "Monsieur! I shall not deny it, in order not to accuse you of a falsehood," and how well that was said, and so on.

In reality, though he had been present at the truce, he had had no chance to say there anything in particular, no matter how anxious he had been to talk to the French (for it is so jolly to talk with Frenchmen). Yunker Baron Pest had walked up and down the line for quite awhile, asking the Frenchmen who were near him, "Of what regiment are you?" to which they answered him, and that was all. But when he went a little too far into the line, a French sentry, who did not suspect that this soldier knew any French, cursed him in the third person: "That accursed one is coming to look at our works." Finding nothing of interest at the truce, Yunker Baron Pest rode home, and on his way back thought out the French phrases which he was now telling. On the boulevard were also Captain Zótov, who was talking in a loud voice, and Captain Obzhógov, dishevelled in appearance, and an artillery captain, who did not seek anybody's favour, and a yunker, fortunate in love, and all the persons of the day before, and all of them with the same eternal impulses. There was only lacking Praskúkhin, Neférdov, and some others, whom hardly any one now remembered, or thought of, though their bodies had not yet been washed, attired, and buried in the ground.

XVI.

In our bastion and in the French trench are floating white flags, and between them, in the blooming valley, lie in heaps, without boots, in gray and blue uniforms, the disfigured corpses, which workmen are carrying away and placing on wagons. The odour of corpses fills the air. From Sevastopol and from the French camp, masses of people have poured out to behold this spectacle, and with eager and benign curiosity they rush toward each other.

Let us hear what these people are saying one to another.

Here, in a circle of Russians and Frenchmen, who have gathered around him, a youthful officer, speaking poor though intelligible French, is looking at a cartridge-box of the guards.

"What is this bird for?"

"Because it is a cartridge-box of a regiment of the guards, sir, which bears the imperial eagle."

"And are you of the guards?"

"Pardon, sir, I am of the sixth of the line."

"And this — where bought?" asks the officer, pointing to a yellow, wooden cigar-holder, in which the Frenchman is smoking a cigarette.

"At Balakláva, sir! It is not much, just of palm-wood."

"Pretty!" says the officer, being guided in his conversation, not so much by his wishes, as by the words which he chances to know.

"If you will have the kindness to keep this as a memento of this meeting, you will oblige me."

And the polite Frenchman blows out the cigarette, and hands the cigar-holder to the officer, with a slight bow. The officer gives him his, and all persons in the group, both Frenchmen and Russians, seem to be very much pleased, and smile.

Then a dashing infantryman, in pink shirt, and overcoat hanging over his shoulders, in company with other soldiers, who, with their hands behind their backs, with merry, curious faces, stand behind him, walks up to a Frenchman, and asks for a light for his pipe. The Frenchman takes a few puffs, pokes his little pipe, and pours some burning tobacco on the Russian's.

"Tobacco *boun*," says the soldier in the pink shirt, and the spectators smile.

"Yes, good tobacco, Turkish tobacco," says the Frenchman. "And with you, Russian tobacco? Good?"

"Russian *boun*," says the soldier in the pink shirt, whereat the crowd roll with laughter. "French not *boun*, *bon jour*, *moussié!*" says the soldier in the pink shirt, discharging at once his whole supply of linguistic knowledge, and tapping the Frenchman's abdomen, and all laugh. The Frenchmen laugh, too.

"They are no beauties, those stupid Russians," says a zouave in the throng of Frenchmen.

"What are they laughing about?" says another, a swarthy fellow, with an Italian pronunciation, coming up to our soldiers.

"Caftan *boun*," says the dashing soldier, examining the embroidered coat-skirts of the zouave, and again they laugh.

"Don't walk out of your line, back to your places, *sacré nom!*" shouts a French corporal, and the soldiers disperse in obvious displeasure.

And here, in a circle of French officers, our young

cavalry officer is making himself conspicuous. They are talking about a certain Count Sazónov, "whom I used to know well, sir," says a French officer with one epaulet, "he is one of those real Russian counts, such as we love."

"There is a Sazónov, whom I used to know," says the cavalryman, "but he is no count, so far as I know. He is a short, dark-complexioned man, about your age."

"That's it, sir, that's he. Oh, how I would like to see that dear count. If you see him, please give him my regards. Captain Latour," he says, bowing.

"Is not this a terrible business we are in? It was hot work last night, was it not?" says the cavalryman, trying to keep up the conversation, and pointing to the dead bodies.

"Oh, sir, it is terrible! But what brave fellows your soldiers are, what brave fellows! It is a pleasure to fight with such brave soldiers."

"I must confess yours are themselves up to snuff," says the cavalryman, bowing, and imagining that he is a really clever fellow.

Enough of that.

Let us rather look at this ten-year-old boy, who, in an old cap, no doubt his father's, in shoes worn on bare feet, and in nankeen trousers, held up by one suspender, had gone beyond the rampart at the very beginning of the truce, and has all the time been walking through the ravine, looking with dull curiosity at the French and at the dead bodies lying on the ground, and collecting wild blue flowers, with which this valley is strewn. On his way home with a large nosegay, he, closing his nose against the odour which the wind is wafting to him, stops near a heap of piled up bodies, and for a long time gazes at one headless corpse, which is nearest to him. After standing for awhile, he moves up and touches with his foot the outstretched stiff arm of the corpse. The hand shakes a little. He touches it a second time, a little

more boldly. The hand shakes again, and stops in the old place. The boy suddenly shrieks, hides his face in the flowers, and runs away to the fortress at full speed.

Yes, in the fortress and in the trench float white flags; the blooming valley is filled with dead bodies; the fair sun descends toward the blue sea; and the blue sea, billowing, glitters under the golden rays of the sun. Thousands of people are crowding, looking, talking, and smiling to each other. And will not these people, — these Christians who profess one great religion of love and renunciation, — seeing what they have done, suddenly kneel down in repentance before Him who, having given them life, has implanted in the soul of every one, together with the terror of death, the love of goodness and beauty? And will they not embrace each other as brothers, with tears of joy and happiness? The white flags are put away, and again the instruments of death and suffering shriek, again flows innocent blood, and are heard groans and curses.

I have said what I had intended to say this time. But I am assailed by heavy doubt. Perhaps I ought not to have said this; perhaps that which I have said belongs to one of those evil truths which, lurking unconsciously in each soul, ought not to be proclaimed, in order not to become noxious, like the dregs of wine, which must not be shaken, lest it be spoiled.

Where is the expression of evil which one must avoid? Where is the expression of goodness in this narrative which should be emulated? Who is its villain, and who its hero? All are good, and all are bad.

Neither Kalúgin, with his brilliant bravery, *bravoure de gentilhomme*, and his vanity, prime mover of all his actions, nor Praskúkhin, an empty-headed, harmless man, though fallen on the field of battle for his faith, his throne, and his country, nor Mikháylov, with his bashfulness, nor

Pest, a child without firm convictions and rules, can be the villains or the heroes of the narrative.

The hero of my narrative, whom I love with all the powers of my soul, whom I have endeavoured to reproduce in all his beauty, and who has always been, who is, and always will be beautiful, is truth.

IN AUGUST, 1855

I.

TOWARD the end of August, an officer's vehicle (that peculiar vehicle, not to be met with elsewhere, which forms something intermediate between a Jewish calash, a Russian cart, and a hamper-wagon) was driving at a walk through the dense, hot dust of the Sevastopol highway, which runs through a ravine between Duvánka and Bakhchisaráy.

In the front of the vehicle squatted an orderly, in a nankeen coat and what had formerly been an officer's cap, but now was crushed into a soft shape, pulling at the reins; behind, on bundles and bales covered with a soldier's mantle, sat an infantry officer in a summer overcoat. The officer was, so far as one could judge of him in his sitting posture, not very tall of stature, but exceedingly broad, and that not so much from shoulder to shoulder, as from his breast to his back; he was broad and stocky, and his neck and nape were well developed and puffed up. A waist, that is, a recess in the middle of his body, he did not have, nor was there any belly; on the contrary, he was rather spare, particularly in the face, which was covered by an unhealthy sallow sunburn. His face would have been handsome but for a certain bloated appearance and the large soft wrinkles, not of old age,

which flowed together and magnified his features, and gave the whole countenance an expression of staleness and coarseness. His eyes were small, hazel, exceedingly vivacious, even bold; his moustache very thick, but not broad, and gnawed at the ends; and his chin, and particularly his cheeks, were covered with an exceedingly heavy, thick black beard of two days' standing.

The officer had been wounded on the 10th of May by a splinter in his head, on which he was still wearing a bandage, and now, having felt completely well for a week, he was returning from the hospital at Simferopol to his regiment, which was stationed somewhere in the direction from which the firing was heard, — but whether in Sevastopol itself, on the Northern side, or at Inkerman, he had not been able to get any reliable information.

The firing was heard very distinctly, frequently, and, it seemed, very close, particularly whenever the mountains were not in the way, or the wind carried the sounds. Now it appeared as though an explosion were shaking the whole air, and causing him to tremble involuntarily; now less loud sounds followed each other in rapid succession, like the roll of a drum, interrupted now and then by a sharp roar; or everything blended into crackling peals, resembling the thunderclaps, when the storm is at its worst, and the rain has just started down in sheets. Everybody was saying that the bombardment was terrible, and so, indeed, it appeared from the sound.

The officer urged his orderly to drive faster: he evidently wanted to get there as soon as possible. On the way they met a large caravan of Russian peasant carts that had taken provision to Sevastopol, and that now were returning, loaded with sick and wounded soldiers in gray overcoats, sailors in black cloaks, volunteers in red fezes, and reserve militiamen with beards. The officer's vehicle was compelled to stop in the dense, immovable cloud of dust raised by the caravan, and the

officer, blinking and scowling from the dust which filled his eyes and ears, glanced at the faces of the sick and the wounded, who were moving past him.

"That feeble soldier is from our company," said the orderly, turning to his master, and pointing to a cart filled with wounded men, which had just come abreast of them.

In the front of the cart sat in a sideways posture a long-bearded Russian, in a lambskin cap. Holding the butt of his whip with his elbow, he was plaiting the lash. Behind him five or six soldiers were jostled in all kinds of attitudes in the bed of the wagon. One, with his arm in a sling, with his overcoat thrown over his shirt, though pale and haggard, was sitting upright in the middle of the vehicle; he put his hand to his cap, when he saw the officer, but, evidently recalling that he was wounded, he pretended to be scratching his head. Another, alongside him, was lying in the bottom of the cart; all that was visible were his two hands with which he held on to the rounds of the cart, and his raised knees that swayed in all directions like mops. The third, with a bloated face and bandaged head, over which towered a soldier-cap, was sitting toward one side, with his feet dangling down to the wheel, and, leaning with his arms on his knees, seemed to be dozing. It was to him that the travelling officer directed his speech.

"Dólzhnikov!" he cried.

"I!" answered the soldier, opening his eyes and doffing his cap, and speaking in a thick staccato bass, as though some twenty soldiers were shouting all at once.

"When were you wounded, my friend?"

The leaden, suffused eyes of the soldier became animated; he had obviously recognized his officer.

"I wish you health, your Honour!" he uttered, in the same staccato bass.

"Where is the regiment stationed now?"

"They were standing in Sevastopol, and they were to move on Wednesday, your Honour."

"Whither?"

"I don't know — probably on the Northern side, your Honour! To-day, your Honour," he added in a drawling voice, putting on his cap, "he has begun to shoot straight across, mostly bombs, and they are carried as far as the bay; the firing is awful to-day, and —"

Further it was not possible to hear what the soldier was saying; but by his face and pose one could see that he was telling disheartening things, with the malice of a suffering man.

The travelling officer, Lieutenant Kozeltsóv, was an officer out of the ordinary. He was not one of those who live so or so, and do so or so, because others are living and doing so; he did everything which pleased him best, and others followed his example, and were convinced that it was good. He was sufficiently well endowed by nature with small gifts: he sang well, played the guitar, spoke fluently, and wrote with ease, particularly government documents, in which he had acquired a facility while being an adjutant of a battalion; but most noticeable was his trait of egoistical energy, which, though chiefly based on his petty endowments, was in itself a well-defined and striking feature. He was possessed of the egoism, which is so large a part of life itself (and which is most frequently evolved in exclusively masculine, and especially in military, circles), that he could not comprehend any other choice but to lead or to be annihilated, and that his egoism was even the prime mover of all his inward convictions; he naturally wanted to surpass all people with whom he compared himself.

"Of course, I am not going to pay any attention to what Moscow[1] is prattling!" muttered the lieutenant, conscious

[1] So the common soldiers are called collectively.

of a burden of apathy on his heart, and of a mistiness of thoughts, which were caused by the aspect of the convoy of the wounded and by the soldier's words, the meaning of which was involuntarily increased and confirmed by the sounds of the bombardment. "Funny Moscow! Go, Nikoláev! Move on — Have you fallen asleep?" he added, in a somewhat angry voice, adjusting the folds of his overcoat.

The reins began to be pulled, Nikoláev smacked his lips, and the vehicle started at a gallop.

"We will stop for only a minute to feed them, and we will move on to-day," said the officer.

II.

JUST as he was driving into a street of Duvánka, with its demolished stone walls of Tartar houses, Lieutenant Kozeltsóv was stopped by a convoy of bombs and cannon-balls, on its way to Sevastopol, and crowded together on the road.

Two infantrymen were sitting in the dust on the stones of a ruined fence, near the road, and eating a watermelon with bread.

"Are you going far, countryman?" said one of them, munching his bread, to a soldier with a small bag over his shoulders, who had stopped near them.

"I am on my way to the company from the provincial capital," answered the soldier, looking away from the melon, and adjusting his bag on his back. "We have been for nearly three weeks looking after the company's hay, but now they have called everybody back; and it is not known in what place the regiment is at present. They say that our men last week relieved those on the Shipwharf. Have you not heard, gentlemen?"

"In the city, brother, in the city it is stationed," said the other old soldier of the baggage-train, who was digging with his clasp knife into the unripe, white melon. "We have just left there at noon. It is awful there, brother!"

"How so, gentlemen?"

"Don't you hear them? They are firing all around, so that there is not a place safe. It is impossible to tell how many of our brothers they have killed!"

. . . .

And the speaker waved his hand and straightened his cap.

The pedestrian soldier thoughtfully shook his head, smacked his tongue, then took out of his boot-leg a pipe, without filling it, poked the half-burned tobacco, lighted a piece of punk with the pipe of the soldier who was smoking, and raised his cap.

"Only God can help us, gentlemen! Good-bye!" he said, and, adjusting the sack on his back, walked up the road.

"Ho there, wait a little!" persuasively said the one who was digging into the watermelon.

"It's all the same!" mumbled the pedestrian, winding his way between the wheels of the crowding vehicles.

III.

THE station was filled with people when Kozeltsóv drove up to it. The first person whom he met on the porch was a very young, haggard man, the inspector, who kept exchanging words with two officers following at his heels.

"You will wait not only three days, but even ten days! Generals have to wait, too, sir!" said the inspector, with the desire to sting the travellers. "You don't expect me to harness myself for you!"

"Then don't give anybody any horses, if there are none! Why were they given to a lackey with his things?" cried the older of the two officers, with a glass of tea in his hands, and apparently avoiding the use of the personal pronoun, but letting him feel that he could have used "thou" to the inspector if he had wanted.

"Now you judge for yourself, Mr. Inspector," said the other, the younger officer, hesitatingly, "we are not travelling for our personal pleasure. No doubt we are wanted, if we have been ordered out. If you won't let us have them, I will write to the general. But what is this?—You, it seems, do not respect the officers' calling."

"You always spoil things!" the older officer interrupted him. "You are only in my way; one must know how to talk with him. Now he has lost his respect for us. Give us horses this minute!" I say.

"Most gladly, sir, but where shall I get them?"

The inspector kept a moment's silence, and suddenly grew excited, and, waving his hands, began to speak:

"I understand it all and know it all, sir. But what are you going to do? Give me only" (the faces of the officers were lit up by hope) — "give me only a chance to live to the end of the month, and I will no longer be here. I prefer to go to Mound Malákhov, than to stay here, upon my word! Let them do what they please. In the whole station there is not one safe vehicle, and the horses have not had a bunch of hay for three days."

And the inspector disappeared through the gate.

Kozeltsóv entered the room at the same time with the officers.

"Well," the older officer quietly said to the younger, though but a second before he had seemed to be excited, "we have been travelling for three months, so we will wait a little longer. No great misfortune, — we shall get there early enough."

The smoky, dirty room was so crowded with officers and portmanteaus, that Kozeltsóv barely found a place on the window to sit down. Looking at the officers' countenances, and listening to their conversations, he began to roll a cigarette. On the right of the door, near a crooked, greasy table, on which stood two samovárs with the brass turned green in spots, and where pieces of sugar lay on bits of paper, sat the chief group: a young officer, without moustache, in a new quilted summer coat, was filling the teapot; four officers of about the same age were scattered in the different corners of the room. One of these slept on the divan, having rolled up his fur coat under his head; another, who stood at the table, was carving some roast mutton for a one-armed officer seated there. Two officers, one of them in an adjutant's overcoat, the other in an infantry overcoat, but one of fine material, and with his cartridge-box slung over his shoulder, sat near the oven bench; from the manner in which both looked at the others, and in which the one with the cartridge-box smoked his cigar, it was evident that they were not infan-

try officers at the front, and that they were satisfied with this. It cannot be said that their manner showed contempt, but a certain self-satisfied composure, based partly on their wealth and partly on their relations with generals, — a consciousness of superiority, rising to a desire to conceal it.

A youthful, thick-lipped doctor and an artillery officer with a German physiognomy were sitting almost on the legs of the young officer who was asleep on the divan, and were counting some money. Some four orderlies were either dozing, or attending to portmanteaus and bundles at the door. Among all these persons, Kozeltsóv did not find a single acquaintance; but he began attentively to listen to their conversations. He took at once a liking for the young officers, who, as he immediately decided from their looks, were coming directly from the corps, and, moreover, they reminded him that his brother, also fresh from the corps, was to arrive in a few days at one of the batteries of Sevastopol. But in the officer with the cartridge-box, whose face he had seen somewhere, everything seemed to him disgusting and impudent. He even left the window with the thought, "I will settle him, if he tries to say anything," and sat down on the oven bench. Being simply a good officer at the front, he could not, as a general rule, bear any officers of the staff, such as he judged at first glance those two to be.

IV.

"BUT this is dreadfully annoying," said one of the young officers, "to be so near, and yet not to be able to reach it. There may be an engagement to-day, and we shall not be there."

In the piping tone of the voice, and in the fresh, spotted blush which covered the face of the officer while he was speaking, one could see the refreshing, youthful bashfulness of a man who is all the time afraid that his words are not properly chosen.

The armless officer looked at him with a smile.

"You will get there in plenty time, believe me," he said.

The young officer looked respectfully at the haggard face of the armless man, which was unexpectedly brightened by a smile, and he grew silent and busied himself with the tea. Indeed, in the face of the one-armed officer, in his attitude, and especially in the empty sleeve of his overcoat, was expressed much of that calm equanimity which could be explained by the assumption that in every affair and conversation he looked as though saying, "All this is very beautiful, all this I know, and all this I could do myself if I wanted to."

"What, then, is our decision?" again said the young officer to his companion in the quilted coat, "shall we remain here overnight or shall we continue travelling with our horse?"

His companion refused to continue the journey.

"Just think of it, captain," continued the one who was

pouring out the tea, turning to the armless officer, and lifting up the knife which he had dropped, "they told us that horses were dreadfully expensive at Sevastopol, and so we bought a horse in partnership at Simferopol."

"I suppose they have fleeced you for it?"

"Really, I do not know, captain. We paid for the horse and vehicle ninety roubles. Is that very dear?" he added, turning to everybody in general and in particular to Kozeltsóv, who was watching him.

"No, not dear, if it is a young horse," said Kozeltsóv.

"You see! And they told us that it was too dear — He is a little lame now, but that will pass. We were told that he was a strong horse."

"You are from what corps?" asked Kozeltsóv, wishing to find out something about his brother.

"We are from the yeomen's regiment, — there are six of us, and we are all bound for Sevastopol, at our own request," said the talkative young officer. "The trouble is, we do not know where our batteries are; some say, at Sevastopol, and others again say, at Odessa."

"Could you not have found out at Simferopol?" asked Kozeltsóv.

"They did not know — Let me tell you, our comrade went there to the chancery; they told him a lot of rude things — you can imagine how disagreeable that is — Would you wish a cigarette all rolled up?" he said to the armless officer, who was on the point of getting out his cigarette-holder.

He was attentive to him with a certain servile enthusiasm.

"Are you yourself from Sevastopol?" he continued. "O Lord, how wonderful all this is! In St. Petersburg we have been thinking of you, of all the heroes!" he said, turning to Kozeltsóv with respect and kindliness.

"Well, so you may have to journey back again?" asked the ensign.

"That is what we are afraid of. You may imagine: we have bought a horse, and have provided ourselves with all necessaries, — a coffee-pot with a spirit-lamp, and other necessary trifles, — and now we have no money left," he said in a quiet voice, looking back at his companion, "so that, if we have to journey back, we do not know what to do."

"Did you not get any travelling money?" asked Kozeltsóv.

"No," he answered in a whisper, "but we were promised that we should get it here."

"Have you any certificate to that effect?"

"I know that the certificate is the main thing, but there is a senator in Moscow, he is an uncle of mine, — and when I called at his house, he assured me that they would give it to me here, or else I should have taken some from him. Will they give it?"

"Certainly."

"I myself think they will," he said, in a tone which proved that, having asked the same thing at thirty stations, and having received all kinds of answers, he no longer had any full confidence in anybody's statement.

V.

"WHO has asked for beet-soup?" demanded the slovenly landlady, a woman about forty years of age, entering the room with a soup-bowl.

The conversation stopped at once, and all the persons in the room gazed at the landlady. One officer even winked to another.

"Oh, Kozeltsóv asked for it," said the young officer. "We must wake him. Get up and eat!" he said, going up to the one who was sleeping on the divan, and pushing him by the shoulder.

A boy, seventeen years of age, with vivacious black eyes and a blush covering his whole cheek, sprang up energetically from the divan, and, rubbing his eyes, stopped in the middle of the room.

"Oh, pardon me," he said to the doctor, whom he had pushed in rising.

Lieutenant Kozeltsóv at once recognized his brother, and went up to him.

"Do you not know me?" he said, smiling.

"Ah, ah, ah!" cried the younger brother, beginning to kiss his brother, "now that is remarkable!"

They kissed three times, but hesitated on the third time, as though both were struck by the idea, "Why exactly three times?"

"Oh, how glad I am!" said the elder, gazing at his brother. "Let us go out on the porch and talk!"

"Come, come! I do not want any soup — You eat it, Féderson!" he said to his companion.

"But you wanted to eat."

"I do not want anything."

When they had gone out on the porch, the younger brother kept asking, "Well, tell me how you are," and kept on saying how glad he was to see him, but did not tell anything about himself.

"I want to get back to Sevastopol as soon as possible: if one has luck, one can advance here faster than in the guards. There it takes ten years to become a colonel, and here Tótleben was promoted in two years from lieutenant-colonel to general. And if I am killed, well, what's to be done?"

"That's the kind of fellow you are!" said his brother, smiling.

"Really, do you know, brother?" said the younger, smiling and blushing, as though getting ready to say something disgraceful. "All this is nothing. The chief reason why I asked to be sent down here is, I was ashamed to stay in St. Petersburg, while here men are dying for their country. And, then, I wanted to be with you," he added, more bashfully still.

"How funny you are!" said the elder brother, drawing out his cigarette-holder, and without looking at him. "What a pity, we shall not be together."

"Now, tell me truthfully, is it terrible in the bastions?" suddenly asked the younger.

"At first it is terrible, then you get used to it, and it is all right. You will see for yourself."

"Now tell me this: will they take Sevastopol? I think they never will."

"God knows."

"Here is an annoyance — Just think of my bad luck! On the road they stole a whole bundle, and my hat was in it, so that I am now in a terrible fix, and do not know how to make my appearance."

Kozeltsóv the second, Vladímir, very much resembled

his brother Mikháylo, just as a blooming rose-bush resembles a defloured brier. His hair, too, was blond, but thick and curling over the temples. On his white, tender nape there was a small blond lock — a sign of good fortune, as the nurses say. On the tender white skin of his cheeks did not dwell, but burst forth, a full-blooded, youthful blush, betraying all the movements of his soul. His eyes, although like his brother's, were opener and brighter, which was the more apparent because they were covered by a light film of moisture. A blond down was sprouting on his cheeks and over his red lips that folded themselves into a bashful smile, or displayed his white, shining teeth. Stately, broad-shouldered, in his unbuttoned overcoat, underneath which could be seen a red shirt with a slanting collar, with a cigarette in his hand, leaning against the balustrade of the porch, with a naïve joy expressed in his face and gestures, he was such a charming boy, as he stood before his brother, that he could stand there and look at him for a long time.

He was very happy to see his brother, and looked at him with respect and pride, thinking of him as a hero; but in some respects, namely, in worldly knowledge, in the ability of speaking French, and of being in the society of distinguished people, of dancing, and so forth, he was a little ashamed of him, looked down upon him, and even hoped to be able to educate him. All his impressions were fresh from St. Petersburg, from the house of a lady who was fond of good-looking fellows, and who had had him at her house during the holidays, and from the house of the Moscow senator, where he had once danced at a great ball.

VI.

HAVING talked their fill, and having finally reached a feeling, frequently experienced, that there was little in common between them, even though they loved each other, the brothers remained silent for quite awhile.

"Take your things, and we will start at once," said the elder brother.

The younger suddenly blushed, and was ill at ease.

"Straight to Sevastopol?" he asked, after a moment's silence.

"Why, yes. You have not many things; I suppose we can manage them."

"Very well! We will start at once," said the younger, with a sigh, and entered the room.

But, before opening the door, he stopped in the vestibule, gloomily hung his head, and began to think:

"At once straight to Sevastopol, under the bombs — terrible! However, it is all the same; sooner or later it would have to be. Now, at least, it will be with brother — "

The trouble was that only now, at the thought that, after seating himself in the vehicle, he would not get out of it until he found himself in Sevastopol, and that no accident whatsoever could detain him, did he form for the first time a clear conception of the danger which he was seeking, and he was disturbed in mind at the mere thought of its nearness. Having calmed himself a little, he entered the room; but fifteen minutes passed, and he had not yet come out to his brother, so that the latter

finally opened the door, in order to call him. The younger Kozeltsóv, in the attitude of a guilty schoolboy, was speaking about something to Officer P——. When the brother opened the door, he looked completely lost.

"Directly, directly!" he said, waving his hand to his brother. "Wait there a moment, if you please."

A minute later he came out, and went up to his brother with a deep sigh.

"Just think of it, I cannot journey with you, brother," he said.

"How is that? What nonsense!"

"I will tell you the whole truth, Mísha! We are all out of money, and we all owe some to that staff-captain whom you have seen in there. It is a perfect shame!"

The elder brother frowned, and for a long time did not break the silence.

"Do you owe much?" he asked, looking at his brother with a scowl.

"Not much, not very much; but it makes me feel ashamed. He has paid for me at three stations, and it was all the time his sugar we have been using — so that I do not know — and we have been playing at preference — I am indebted to him a little."

"That is bad, Volódya! What would you have done, if you had not met me?" the elder brother said, sternly, without looking at him.

"Well, I thought I should get the travelling money at Sevastopol, and so I should pay him there. I certainly can fix it that way; and so it will be better if I journey with him to-morrow."

The elder brother drew out his purse, and with a certain quivering in his fingers, took out from it two ten-rouble and one three-rouble bills.

"Here is all my money," he said. "How much do you owe?"

When Kozeltsóv said that this was all his money, he

was not telling the whole truth; he had besides four gold coins sewn into the lining of the coat against an evil day, but he had vowed that he would never touch them.

It turned out that Kozeltsóv owed in all, for the preference and for the sugar, eight roubles. The elder brother gave him the money, remarking at the same time that it would not do to act that way, and especially to play at preference.

"What did you play for?"

The younger brother did not answer a word. His brother's question appeared to him as a doubt of his honesty. His annoyance with himself, his shame of his action, which had given rise to such suspicions, and the insult from his brother, whom he loved so, produced on his impressionable nature such a strong and morbid sensation, that he did not make any reply. Feeling that he would not be able to keep back the tearful sounds which were rising in his throat, he took the money, without looking at it, and went in to his companions.

VII.

NIKOLÁEV, who in Duvánka fortified himself with two swallows of brandy, purchased from a soldier selling it on the bridge, jerked the reins; the vehicle jolted over the rocky and occasionally shaded road which led along the Belbek to Sevastopol, and the brothers, whose legs were continually striking against each other, kept a stubborn silence, though they were all the time thinking one of the other.

"Why did he offend me?" thought the younger. "He might have passed it over in silence. He acted as though he took me for a thief, and he seems to be angry even now, so that our relations will for ever be strained. And how glorious it could otherwise be for both of us at Sevastopol! Two brothers, friendly to each other, are both fighting against the enemy: the elder brother, though not a very well educated man, is already a brave soldier, and the younger — well, he is a valiant fellow himself — In a week I should prove to everybody's satisfaction that I am no longer so very young! I will quit blushing; in my face will be expressed bravery; and by that time my moustache, though not very long, will be of considerable size," and he pulled the down which had appeared at the edges of his mouth.

"Maybe we shall arrive to-day to take part at once in an engagement, both my brother and I. He must be stubborn and brave, one of those who do not talk much, but act better than others. I should like to know," he continued, "whether he is jamming me into the edge of

the vehicle on purpose, or not. He, no doubt, feels that I am ill at ease, and looks as though he did not notice me. We shall arrive to-day," he continued his reflections, keeping to the edge of the vehicle, and fearing to move, lest his brother should notice that he was ill at ease, "and we shall make at once for the bastion; I at the guns, and my brother with his company, and we shall march together. Suddenly the French will rush upon us. I — to shoot, and shoot. I will kill a lot of them; but they continue to press forward. There is no chance of firing, and, of course, there is no salvation for me; but suddenly brother will dash ahead, with sabre in hand, and I will seize a gun, and the soldiers will run with us. The French will rush up to brother. I will run up, will kill one Frenchman and another, and will save brother. I shall be wounded in one arm, so will seize the gun with the other, and will still run forward, Only brother will be killed by a bullet at my side; I will stop for an instant, will look sadly at him, will rise to my feet, and will shout: 'After me! Let us avenge his death! I have loved my brother more than anybody in this world,' I will say, 'and I have lost him. Revenge! Let us annihilate the foe, or die all together!'

"All will shout, and will plunge forward after me. The whole French army will come out, and Pelissier himself. We will destroy them all; but I am wounded a second, and a third time, and I shall fall down to my death. Then everybody will run up to me. Gorchakóv will come, and will ask me what I wish. I will say that I have no other wish than to be placed by my brother's side, and that I want to die with him. I shall be carried and put down near the blood-stained body of my brother. I will lift myself a little, and say: 'Yes, you were unable properly to estimate the two men who have sincerely loved their country; now they have both fallen — may God forgive you!' and I shall expire."

Who knows to what extent these dreams might be realized!

"Have you ever been in a hand-to-hand encounter?" he suddenly asked his brother, forgetful of the fact that he had intended not to speak to him.

"No, not once," answered the elder brother. "In our regiment two thousand men were put out of action while at work, and I, too, was wounded while at work. War does not take place at all as you imagine it, Volódya!"

The word "Volódya" touched the younger brother: he wanted to have an explanation from his brother, who did not have the slightest idea that he had offended Volódya.

"You are not angry at me, Mísha?" he asked, after a moment's silence.

"For what?"

"No, nothing — that there has been — oh, nothing."

"Not in the least," answered the elder brother, turning to him, and slapping his leg.

"Then you must forgive me, Mísha; if I have given you cause for grief."

And the younger brother turned away, in order to conceal the tears that suddenly had appeared in his eyes.

VIII.

"Is it possible this is Sevastopol already?" asked the younger brother, as the vehicle reached the top of a hill.

Before them lay the bay with the masts of ships, the sea with the hostile fleet in the distance, the white shore batteries, the barracks, the water-works, the docks, the city buildings, and the pale violet clouds of smoke, which were continually rising along the yellow hills that surrounded the city, and that stood out against the blue sky, in the rosy beams of the sun, which now was brilliantly reflected and setting at the horizon of the dark sea.

Volódya beheld without shuddering the terrible place of which he had been thinking so much. On the contrary, with æsthetic enjoyment and with a heroic sensation of self-satisfaction, that in half an hour he himself would be there, he gazed at this truly enchanting and original spectacle, and he continued gazing at it up to the very time when they arrived at the Northern side, at the baggage-train of his brother's regiment, where they were to get definite information as to the location of the regiment and battery.

The officer in charge of the baggage-train was living near the so-called new town, — a collection of frame barracks, built by sailor families, — in a tent which was connected with a fairly large booth, constructed of green oak boughs that had not yet become sufficiently dry.

The brothers found the officer at a dirty table, on which stood a glass of cold tea, a salver with brandy and crumbs of dry caviar and bread, clad in a soiled yellow shirt,

counting up on a large abacus an immense heap of paper money. But before saying anything about the personality of the officer and his conversation, we must take a closer look at the interior of his booth, and get a little acquainted with his manner of life and occupations.

The new booth was large, firmly plaited, and comfortably constructed; it was provided with little tables and sod benches, and was altogether such as are built only for generals or regimental commanders. The sides and the ceiling were protected from the falling leaves by three rugs which, though of atrocious designs, were new and, no doubt, expensive. On an iron bed underneath the main rug, with the representation of a horsewoman upon it, lay a bright red plush coverlet, a soiled torn pillow, and a raccoon fur coat; on the table stood a looking-glass in a silver frame, a terribly dirty silver hairbrush, a broken horn comb full of greasy hair, a silver candlestick, a bottle of liqueur with an immense label in red and gold, a gilded clock with the portrait of Peter the Great, two gold pens, a box with some kind of capsules, a bread crust, and old cards lying in a heap, while under the bed stood empty and full bottles.

This officer was in charge of the regiment's baggage and of the provender for the horses. With him lived his great friend, a commissionaire, who was interested in some speculations. As the brothers entered, he was asleep in the tent, while the officer of the baggage-train was counting up the Crown money before the end of the month. The exterior of this officer was handsome and martial: he was tall, wore a long moustache, and was of noble proportions. His disagreeable points were a certain sweaty and bloated condition of his face, which almost concealed his small gray eyes (as though he were saturated with porter), and an extraordinary neglect of his person, from his greasy hair down to his large bare feet in ermine-fur slippers.

"What a lot of money! What a lot of it!" said Kozeltsóv the elder, upon entering the booth, and with involuntary greed directing his eyes upon the heap of bills. "If you lent me only one-half of it, Vasíli Mikháylovich!"

The officer stooped a little, as he noticed the newcomers, and, collecting his money, bowed, without rising.

"Ah, if it all were mine! But it is Crown money, my friend — Who is this with you?" he said, putting the money in a small safe which was standing near him, and eyeing Volódya.

"That is my brother, who has come from the corps. We have called here to find out where the regiment is stationed."

"Sit down, gentlemen!" he said, rising, and walking into the tent, without paying any further attention to the guests. "Won't you have a drink, say a little porter?" he said.

"It won't hurt, Vasíli Mikháylovich!"

Volódya was impressed by the magnificence of the officer of the baggage-train, by his nonchalant manner, and by the respect with which his brother spoke to him.

"He must be a very good officer, whom all respect: no doubt he is simple, but hospitable and brave," he thought, modestly and timidly sitting down on the divan.

"Where, then, is our regiment stationed?" the elder brother asked across the tent.

"What?"

He repeated his question.

"Zéyfer was here to-day: he told me they had gone to the fifth bastion."

"Sure?"

"If I tell you so, it must be correct; however, the devil take him! It would not be much for him to tell a lie. Well, will you have some porter?" said the officer, still staying in his tent.

"Very well, I will take a drink," said Kozeltsóv.

"And will you have a glass, Ósip Ignátevich?" continued the voice in the tent, evidently addressing the sleeping commissionaire. "Get up: it is now nearly five o'clock."

"Don't bother me! I am not sleeping," replied a thin, lazy voice.

"Well, get up anyway: it is dull without you!"

The officer of the baggage-train came back to his guests.

"Let us have some Simferopol porter!" he shouted.

An orderly, with a proud expression on his face, so Volódya thought, entered the booth, and, pushing Volódya aside, fetched a bottle of porter from underneath the bench.

The bottle was soon emptied, and the conversation was for some time continued in the same strain, when the folds of the tent were pushed aside, and from it emerged a short, well-preserved man, in a blue dressing-gown with tassels, in a cap with a red border and a cockade. Upon his appearance he was smoothing down his moustache; gazing at some point in the rug, he returned the salute of the officers with a barely perceptible shrug of his shoulders.

"I will take a glass myself!" he said, sitting down at the table. "Are you coming from St. Petersburg, young man?" he said, graciously addressing Volódya.

"Yes, sir, I am on my way to Sevastopol."

"Did you volunteer?"

"Yes, sir."

"What is it that makes you so anxious, gentlemen? Really, I do not understand it!" continued the commissionaire. "It seems to me I would be willing to walk back to St. Petersburg, if they would only let me. I am tired of this accursed life, upon my word!"

"What are you lacking here?" said the elder Kozeltsóv, addressing him. "You, certainly, are having an easy time here!"

The commissionaire glanced at him, and turned away.

"This danger, these privations, — can't get anything," he continued, turning to Volódya. "What makes you so anxious? Gentlemen, I am positively unable to understand you! If there were any advantage from it, but thus! Well, what good is there in your being made a cripple for life at your age?"

"Some need a monetary advantage, and others serve for honour's sake," Kozeltsóv the elder again put in his word.

"Can honour be sweet when there's nothing to eat?" said the commissionaire, smiling contemptously, and turning to the officer of the baggage-train, who also smiled at his witticism. "Set it for 'Lucia,' and we will listen," he said, pointing to a music-box. "I like it."

"Is that Vasíli Mikháylovich a good man?" Volódya asked his brother, after leaving the booth at dusk, and proceeding on their way to Sevastopol.

"Passable, only dreadfully stingy! But I cannot bear that commissionaire. I'll knock him down some day."

IX.

VOLÓDYA was not exactly in an unhappy frame of mind when they reached, almost at night, the large bridge across the harbour, but he experienced a heavy sensation in his heart. Everything he had heard and seen was so incompatible with his past, though still recent, impressions: the large, bright, parqueted examination hall, the good, merry voices, and the laughter of his comrades, the new uniform, the beloved Tsar, whom he had been seeing for the last seven years, and who, bidding them farewell, had, with tears in his eyes, called them his children, — and everything he now saw so little resembled his fair, rainbow-coloured, magnanimous dreams!

"So here we are!" said the elder brother, upon reaching the Michael battery, and climbing out of the vehicle. "If they will let us through the bridge, we will go at once to the Nicholas barracks. You will stay there until morning, and I will go at once to the regiment, and find out where your battery is stationed, and in the morning I will come for you."

"What for? Let us go together," said Volódya. "I will go with you to the bastion. I shall have to get used to it sooner or later. If you are going there, I can, too."

"You had better not go."

"I beg you; I shall, at least, find out how —"

"My advice is not to go. Still —"

The sky was clear and dark; the stars and the fires of the bombs and from the discharges, continuously in mo-

tion, were already gleaming brightly in the darkness. The large white structure of the battery and the beginning of the bridge rose from the darkness. The discharges of several guns and the explosions, rapidly following each other or resounding all together literally every second, shook the air ever louder and more distinctly. Through this roar could be heard the gloomy rumbling of the sea, as though seconding it. The brothers went up to the bridge. A reserve soldier struck his gun against his hand in an awkward manner, and shouted:

"Who goes there?"

"A soldier."

"I have orders not to let any one through."

"But we must be there."

"Ask the officer."

The officer, who was dozing, while sitting on an anchor, rose, and gave the order to let them through.

"You may go there, but not back. Back there! I declare, all at once!" he shouted to the regimental vehicles, laden to the top with gabions, that were crowding at the entrance.

Upon descending to the first pontoon, the brothers fell in with some soldiers who were returning from there, and speaking loudly.

"He has received his supply of ammunition, and so he is squaring up accounts, — that's what I tell you."

"My friends!" said another voice, "as soon as you crawl out on the Northern side, you will see the world again, upon my word! The air is different there."

"Nonsense!" said the first. "The other day an accursed bomb flew as far as this and took off the legs of two sailors, that's what — "

The brothers passed the first pontoon, and, waiting for the vehicle, halted at the second, which in places was already swamped. The wind, which had seemed feeble on land, was very strong here, and came in gusts; the

bridge swayed to and fro, and the waves, noisily washing against the beams and breaking against the moorings and cables, flooded the planks. On the right the sea roared and darkled in a hostile mist, separated by an endless, even, black line from the starry heaven, gleaming pale gray at the horizon; somewhere in the distance glimmered the fires on the hostile fleet; on the left rose the black mass of one of our ships, and could be heard the plashing of the waves against its hull; one could see a steamer noisily and rapidly moving from the Northern side. The fire of a bomb exploding in its neighbourhood for an instant illuminated the gabions heaped high on its deck, two men standing on the bridge, and the white foam and sprays of the greenish waves through which the steamer was ploughing.

At the edge of the bridge a man was sitting in nothing but a shirt, his feet dangling in the water, and was fixing something in the pontoon. In front, over Sevastopol, were borne the same fires, and louder and louder were the sounds that reached them. A surging wave from the sea washed over the right side of the bridge and wet Volódya's feet; two soldiers, splashing their feet in the water, passed by him. Suddenly something crashed and lighted up the bridge in front, a vehicle that was going over it, and a man on horseback, and the splinters fell into the water, whistling and raising spray.

"Ah, Mikháylo Seménych!" said the rider, halting his horse in front of the elder Kozeltsóv. "Well, have you entirely recuperated?"

"As you see. Whither does God carry you?"

"To the Northern side, for cartridges. I am to-day acting regimental adjutant — we are expecting an assault from hour to hour."

"Where is Martsóv?"

"He lost a leg yesterday — he was in town, sleeping in his room — Do you know him?"

"The regiment is in the fifth bastion, is it not?"

"Yes, they have taken the place of the M—— regiment. Go to the ambulance; you will find some of our men there, and they will take you to it."

"Well, and my quarters on the Morskáya are still in good condition?"

"Not at all, my dear! It has long ago been demolished by bombs. You will not recognize Sevastopol now: not a woman, no inns, no music there now; yesterday the last establishment left. It is very sad now — Good-bye!"

And the officer galloped away.

Volódya suddenly felt terribly: he thought that a cannon-ball or a splinter would at any moment strike his head. This moist darkness, all these sounds, especially the growling splash of the waves, — everything seemed to tell him that he should not advance, that nothing good awaited him now, that his foot would never again step on land on the other side of the bay, that he had better turn back and run somewhere, as far away from the place as possible. "But maybe it is already too late; maybe it is my fate," he thought, shuddering partly at this thought, and partly because the water had soaked through his boots, and was wetting his feet.

Volódya drew a deep sigh, and walked a little away, at one side of his brother.

"O Lord! Is it possible I shall be killed? I, Volódya Kozeltsóv? O Lord, have mercy upon me!" he said, in a whisper, making the sign of the cross.

"Come now, Volódya!" said the elder brother, as the vehicle got up on the bridge. "Have you seen the bomb?"

On the bridge the brothers encountered wagons with wounded men, with gabions, and one with furniture which a woman was taking away. On the other side nobody barred their way.

Instinctively, groping along the wall of the Nicholas battery, the brothers listened in silence to the sounds of the bombs which were bursting overhead and to the roar of the splinters that were falling from above, and arrived at that place in the battery where the image was. Here they learned that the fifth light battery, to which Volódya had been assigned, was stationed at the Shipwharf; they decided, in spite of the danger, to go for the night to the elder brother's station in the fifth bastion, and thence, on the following morning, to the battery. Turning into the corridor, and stepping over the legs of the sleeping soldiers, who were lying along the whole wall of the battery, they finally reached the ambulance.

X.

Upon entering the first room, filled with cots, upon which lay the wounded, and saturated with an oppressive, disgustingly terrible hospital odour, they met two Sisters of Mercy, who were walking toward them.

One woman, about fifty years of age, with black eyes and a severe expression on her face, was carrying bandages and lint, and giving orders to a boyish surgeon's assistant, who was following her; the other, a very pretty girl, about twenty years of age, with a pale, gentle, fair-complexioned face, which looked sweet and helpless from underneath her white cap, and with her hands in the pockets of her apron, was walking by the side of the elder woman, apparently afraid to leave her.

Kozeltsóv addressed to them the question as to where Martsóv was, who had lost a leg the day before.

"I think, of the P—— regiment?" asked the older woman. "Is he a relative of yours?"

"No, a comrade."

"Take them there," she said to the young Sister, in French. "Over there," and she herself walked over to a wounded man with the assistant.

"Come now — what are you gazing at?" said Kozeltsóv to Volódya, who had raised his eyebrows and was staring at the wounded with an expression of compassion, without being able to tear himself away from them. "Come on!"

Volódya followed his brother, but he continued to look around and unconsciously to repeat:

"O Lord! O Lord!"

"He has evidently not been here long!" said the Sister to Kozeltsóv, pointing to Volódya, who, sighing and repeating his exclamation, followed them through the corridor.

"He has just arrived."

The pretty sister glanced at Volódya and suddenly burst out weeping. "My God! My God! When will all this end?" she said, with an expression of despair in her voice. They entered the officer's room. Martsóv lay on his back, holding his muscular arms, bared up to the elbow, behind his head, with an expression on his sallow face which showed that he had set his teeth, in order not to cry from pain. His sound leg, in a stocking, stuck out from underneath his coverlet, and one could see how he was convulsively moving his toes.

"Well, how are you?" asked the Sister, with her thin, gentle fingers, upon one of which Volódya noticed a gold ring, raising his somewhat bald head and fixing the pillow. "Your comrades have come to see you."

"Of course, it is painful," he said, angrily. "Let me alone! It is all right." The toes in the stocking began to twitch faster. "How are you? What is your name? Pardon me," he said, turning to Kozeltsóv. "Oh, yes! I beg your pardon! One does forget here everything. We did live together," he added, without the least expression of pleasure, looking questioningly at Volódya.

"This is my brother, he has just arrived from St. Petersburg."

"Hm! And I have received my full discharge," he said, with a scowl. "Oh, how it pains! I wish I were dead!"

He raised his legs, and, continuing to twitch his toes with increased rapidity, covered his face with his hands.

"He must be left alone," the Sister said, in a whisper, with tears in her eyes. "He is in a bad condition."

The brothers had decided while still on the Northern side to go to the fifth bastion. But, as they emerged from the Nicholas battery, they seemed to have agreed not to subject themselves to unnecessary danger, and, without saying anything on this point, they decided to go each his own way.

"But how will you find it, Volódya?" said the elder brother. "Nikoláev will take you to the Shipwharf, and I will go by myself, and will be with you to-morrow."

Nothing else was said in this last farewell between the two brothers.

XI.

THE booming of the cannon was continued with the same force, but the Ekaterínenskaya Street, through which Volódya was walking, with taciturn Nikoláev at his heels, was deserted and quiet. In the dusk he could see only the broad street, with the white walls of large houses mostly in ruins, and the stone sidewalks, over which he was marching: occasionally he met some soldiers and officers. Passing on the left side by the Admiralty, he could discern, in the glaring fire which was burning beyond the wall, the acacias planted along the sidewalk, with their green supports, and the wretched, dust-covered leaves of these trees. He distinctly heard his steps and those of Nikoláev, who was walking behind him, breathing heavily. He thought of nothing in particular: the pretty Sister of Mercy, Martsóv's foot with its toes twitching in the stocking, the bombs, and various pictures of death dimly passed through his imagination. All his youthful, impressionable soul was compressed and pining under the consciousness of his loneliness and of the universal indifference to his fate in danger.

"I shall be killed, shall suffer and writhe, and nobody will weep for me!" And all this in place of the life of a hero, full of energy and sympathy, of which he had had such glorious dreams. The bombs exploded and whistled nearer and nearer; Nikoláev sighed more frequently, without breaking the silence. As he crossed the bridge, which led to the Shipwharf, he saw something strike the water not far from him, with a whistling sound; for a second

it cast a blood-red glamour on the violet waves, then it disappeared, and again rose from it with the spray.

"I declare, she is not dead yet!" said Nikoláev, hoarsely.

"Yes," he answered, involuntarily and unexpectedly to himself, in a thin, piping voice.

They encountered stretchers with wounded soldiers, and again regimental carts with gabions; at the Ship-wharf they fell in with a regiment; horsemen passed by them. One of them was an officer, with a Cossack. He was riding at a gallop, but seeing Volódya, he checked his horse near him, looked into his face, turned away, and rode off, striking his horse with the whip.

"Alone, all alone! It makes no difference to anybody whether I exist or not," thought the boy, and he wanted to weep in earnest.

Having ascended a hill, past a high, white wall, he entered a street of demolished little cottages, which were constantly illuminated by bombs. A drunken, slatternly woman, who came out of a gate with a sailor, stumbled upon him.

"Because, if he were a gentleman," she mumbled, "pardon, your Honour, Mr. Officer!"

The poor boy's heart was becoming heavier and heavier; lightnings flashed oftener and oftener against the black horizon, and bombs oftener and oftener whistled and burst about him. Nikoláev sighed and suddenly began to speak, in what appeared to Volódya a voice of restrained terror.

"There we were in a hurry to leave the province. Journeying all the time. A fine place to hurry to!"

"Brother is well now," replied Volódya, hoping by a conversation to dispel the terrible feeling which had taken possession of him.

"Well? You don't call him well, do you? Even those who are completely well had better stay in a hos-

pital at such a time. What pleasure is there to be found here? A man loses a leg or an arm, that is all! Misfortunes are happening here all the time! It is not in the city here as in the bastion, but it is bad as it is. You walk and you say your prayers. I declare that beast is whizzing past me," he added, listening to the sound of a splinter buzzing past him. "Now," added Nikoláev, "I am told to accompany your Honour. Of course, it is our duty to obey orders; but we have left our cart with a soldier, and a bundle is open — Go, accompany him! And if anything is lost of the property, Nikoláev will be responsible."

After taking a few more steps, they emerged in a square. Nikoláev remained silent, and sighed.

"There your artillery is stationed, your Honour!" he suddenly said. "Ask the sentry: he will show you."

Volódya took a few more steps and no longer heard the sound of Nikoláev's sighs.

All at once he felt himself completely, absolutely, alone. This consciousness of loneliness in the danger preceding death, as it seemed to him, weighed as a terribly heavy, cold stone upon his heart. He stopped in the middle of the square, looked around him, to see whether anybody saw him, clasped his head, and in terror thought and said: "O Lord! Am I indeed a coward, a contemptible, despicable, low coward — for my country, for the Tsar, for whom I had but lately joyfully dreamed to die? No, I am an unfortunate, wretched creature!" And Volódya, with a genuine feeling of despair and disenchantment in himself, asked the sentry for the house of the commander of the battery, and went in the direction pointed out to him.

XII.

THE dwelling of the commander of the battery, which the sentry had pointed out to him, was a small house of two stories, with an entrance from the yard. In one of the windows, pasted over with paper, glimmered a feeble candle-light. The orderly sat on the porch and smoked a pipe. He went in to report to the commander of the battery, and led Volódya into a room. In the room, between two windows, beneath a broken mirror, stood a table, covered with official papers, a few chairs, and an iron bed with clean bedclothes, and a small rug near it.

At the very door stood a handsome man with a long moustache, a sergeant, with his short sword and clad in his overcoat, on which hung a cross and a Hungarian medal. In the middle of the room paced an undersized officer of the staff, about forty years of age, his swollen cheek wrapped up, wearing an old, thin overcoat.

"I have the honour of presenting myself, Ensign Kozeltsóv the second, ordered to report at the fifth light battery," Volódya uttered the phrase which he had learned by rote, upon entering the room.

The commander of the battery dryly returned his salute, and, without offering him his hand, invited him to be seated.

Volódya timidly sat down on the chair near the writing-desk, and began to finger a pair of scissors on which he had laid his hands. The commander of the battery, folding his hands behind his back and lowering his head, silently paced the room, with the expression of a man who

is trying to recollect something, and now and then looked at the hands that were twirling the scissors.

The commander of the battery was a fairly stout man, with a large bald spot on the crown of his head, a thick moustache, left to grow at will, and covering his mouth, and pleasing hazel eyes. His hands were beautiful, clean, and plump; his feet were small, with toes well turned out, and they stepped with conviction and with a certain dandyism, which bore evidence that the commander of the battery was not a bashful man.

"Yes," he said, stopping in front of the sergeant, "beginning with to-morrow we must add a measure of grain for each horse of the caisson, for they are looking rather lean. What do you think about it?"

"Well, we can add it, your Honour! Oats are cheaper now," replied the sergeant, moving the fingers of his hands, which he held straight down along the seams, but which he evidently was fond of displaying as an aid to conversation. "Forager Franchúk brought me yesterday a note from the baggage-train, your Honour, that we must buy our axles there, — they say they are cheap. So what is your order?"

"Buy them! He has the money." And the commander of the battery again started to walk up and down the room. "Where are your things?" he suddenly asked Volódya, halting in front of him.

Poor Volódya was so assailed by the idea that he was a coward that in every glance, in every word, he discovered contempt for him, the wretched coward. It seemed to him that the commander of the battery had already made out his secret, and that he was making light of him. He answered confusedly that his things were on the Gráfskaya wharf, and that his brother had promised to bring them on the next day.

But the lieutenant-colonel was not listening to him; turning to the sergeant, he asked:

"Where shall we locate the ensign?"

"The ensign?" asked the sergeant, still more embarrassing Volódya with a cursory glance, expressive of the question, "What kind of an ensign is he?" "Well, below, your Honour, with the staff-captain, we may place the ensign," he continued, after a moment's thought. "The staff-captain is now in the bastion, so his cot is unoccupied."

"Won't you take it, then, for the time being?" said the commander of the battery. "I suppose you are tired. To-morrow we shall fix it better."

Volódya rose and bowed.

"Wouldn't you like some tea?" said the commander of the battery, as he was approaching the door. "You may order the samovár."

Volódya bowed and went out. The colonel's orderly took him down-stairs, and led him into a bare, dirty room, in which all kinds of lumber were lying around and an iron bed was standing without bedding or coverlet. On the bed slept a man in a pink shirt, covered with a thick overcoat.

Volódya took him for a soldier.

"Peter Nikoláevich!" said the orderly, pushing the sleeping man by the shoulder. "The ensign will lie down here — This is our yunker," he added, turning to the ensign.

"Oh, please do not trouble yourself," said Volódya; but the yunker, a tall, solidly built young man, with a handsome, but very stupid face, rose from the bed, threw the overcoat over his shoulders, and, evidently not yet fully awake, went out of the room.

"That's all right, I will sleep in the yard," he muttered.

XIII.

When Volódya was left alone with his thoughts, his first sensation was a dread of the disorderly and disconsolate condition in which his soul was. He wanted to fall asleep and to forget everything that surrounded him, but especially himself. He put out the candle, lay down on the bed, and, taking off his overcoat, covered his head over with it, so as to free himself of the terror of darkness, to which he had been subject from childhood. Suddenly he was struck by the thought that a bomb would reach the house, pierce the roof, and kill him. He listened attentively; above him could be heard the steps of the commander of the battery.

"Still, if it does reach here," he thought, "it will first kill up-stairs, and me only afterward; at least, I shall not be the only one." This thought calmed him a little; he was beginning to doze off. "But what will happen if Sevastopol is taken to-night, and the French make an irruption here? What shall I defend myself with?" He again got up, and began to pace the room. The terror of the real danger suppressed the mysterious terror of the darkness. There was no solid object in the room but a saddle and a samovár.

"I am a scoundrel, a coward, a vile coward!" he suddenly thought, and once more passed over to the oppressive feeling of contempt and even disgust with himself. He lay down again, and endeavoured not to think. Then the impressions of the day involuntarily rose in his

imagination, under the accompaniment of the uninterrupted sounds which made the panes in the one window tremble, and they again reminded him of the danger: now it was the wounded and the blood that stood before him; now bombs and splinters, that were flying into the room; now the pretty Sister of Mercy, who was dressing his mortal wound, and weeping over him; now his mother, who was seeing him off in the provincial town, and fervently praying, with tears in her eyes, before the miracle-working image, — and again his dream seemed impossible to him. But suddenly the thought of Almighty God, who could do everything and receive every prayer, clearly entered into his mind. He knelt down, made the sign of the cross, and folded his hands as he had been taught to pray in childhood. This attitude suddenly transferred him to a long-forgotten blissful feeling.

"If I must die, if it is necessary that I should not be, take me, O Lord," he thought, "take me as soon as possible; but if bravery, if firmness are needed, which I do not possess, give them to me, save me from shame and disgrace, which I am unable to bear, and teach me what to do in order to execute Thy will."

The shy, childish, limited soul suddenly became manly and bright, and saw new, wide, bright horizons. Many, many things he thought and felt in the short time while this feeling lasted. He soon fell into quiet, undisturbed slumber, under the sounds of the protracted roar of the bombardment and the trembling of the windows.

Almighty God! Thou alone hast heard and knowest those simple, but ardent and despairing prayers of ignorance and of dim repentance, and the entreaties to heal their bodies and enlighten their minds, which have risen to Thee from this terrible place of death, issuing from the mouth of a general, who but a second before had been dreaming of the Cross of St. George on his neck, but now with terror was aware of Thy nearness, down to the

common soldier, who fell down on the bare floor of the Nicholas battery and implored Thee to give him there the unconsciously anticipated reward for all his sufferings!

XIV.

THE elder Kozeltsóv, having met in the street a soldier of his regiment, repaired with him at once to the fifth bastion.

"Hold on to the wall, your Honour!" said the soldier.

"Why?"

"It is dangerous, your Honour; it is carrying across," said the soldier, listening to the sound of a shell whistling past him and striking against the dry earth on the other side of the street.

Kozeltsóv paid no attention to the soldier, but continued to walk briskly in the middle of the street.

The streets were the same; the fires, sounds, groans, and encounters of wounded men were the same, nay, more frequent. The batteries, breastworks, and trenches were the same as in the spring, when he had been in Sevastopol; but all this was for some reason more melancholy now, and at the same time more energetic. There were more breaches in the houses, no lights whatsoever in the windows, except in Kushchín's house (the hospital), not one woman was met with, and on everything lay not the former character of habit and carelessness, but the imprint of oppressive expectation and weariness.

Finally the last trench was reached, and there he heard the voice of a soldier of the P—— regiment, who had recognized the former commander of his company, and there the third battalion stood in the darkness, crowding at the wall, occasionally illuminated by the fire of the

fusilade, but otherwise audible by their subdued conversation and clanking of guns.

"Where is the commander of the regiment?" asked Kozeltsóv.

"In the blindage, with the naval men, your Honour!" replied the obliging soldier. "If you please, I will take you there."

From one trench into another, the soldier brought Kozeltsóv to a ditch in a trench. Here sat a sailor, smoking a pipe; behind him could be seen a door, through the chink of which peeped a light.

"May I enter?"

"I shall announce you at once," and the sailor went through the door.

Two voices were speaking behind the door.

"If Prussia will continue its neutrality," said one voice, "then Austria, too —"

"What of Austria," said another, "when the Slavic countries — go beg them —"

Kozeltsóv had never been in this blindage. It startled him by its elegance. The floor was of parquetry, and a screen covered the door. Along the walls stood two beds; in the corner stood a large image of the Virgin, in gold foil, and in front of it burnt a rose-coloured lamp. On one of the beds slept a sailor, with all his clothes on; on the other, at a table, on which stood two half-full bottles of wine, sat the persons conversing, — the new commander of the regiment, and an adjutant. Though Kozeltsóv was far from being a coward, and was guilty of absolutely nothing, either before the government or before the commander of the regiment, yet he lost his composure before the colonel, who but lately had been his comrade, — so proudly did this colonel rise and listen to him.

"It is strange," thought Kozeltsóv, looking at his commander; "it is only seven weeks since he has assumed

the command of the regiment, and how already in all his surroundings, in his attire, movements, and looks may be discerned the power of a commander of the regiment. How long ago is it," he thought, "since this very Batrísh-chev used to carouse with us, and to wear for weeks at a time a dark-coloured shirt, and to eat all the time chopped steak and cheese pie without inviting any one to his room? And now! There is an expression of chill haughtiness in his eyes, which says to you: 'Though I am a comrade of yours, being a regimental commander of the new school, yet believe me, I know how gladly you would give up half your life, if you could be in my place!'"

"You have been rather long convalescing," the colonel said coldly to Kozeltsóv, looking at him.

"I was ill, colonel! Even now the wound is not all healed over."

"Then there was no use coming," said the colonel, eyeing the officer's whole form with a suspicious glance. "But can you attend to duty?"

"Certainly I can."

"I am glad of it. Take then from Ensign Záytsev the ninth company, — the one you had before; you will get the order at once."

"Yes, sir."

"Be so kind as to send to me the adjutant of the regiment, when you leave," concluded the commander of the regiment, letting him know by a slight inclination of his head that the interview was at an end.

Coming out of the blindage, Kozeltsóv grumbled something several times and shrugged his shoulders, as though something pained, annoyed, and mortified him; it was not the commander of the regiment who mortified him (there was no reason for that), but he was somehow dissatisfied with himself and with all that surrounded him.

XV.

BEFORE meeting his officers, Kozeltsóv went to greet his company and to find out where it was stationed. The breastwork of gabions, the forms of the trenches, the cannon that he passed, even the splinters and bombs against which he stumbled on his way, — all this continually illuminated by the fires of the discharges, was quite familiar to him; all this had been well impressed upon his memory three months before, during the two weeks he had passed without interruption in this very bastion. Though there was much of a terrifying nature in these reminiscences, yet there was mingled with them a certain charm of the past, and it gave him pleasure to recognize the familiar places and objects, as though he had passed two agreeable weeks here. The company was stationed near the defensive wall on the side of the sixth bastion.

Kozeltsóv entered a long blindage, which was entirely open on the side of the entrance, and in which he was told the ninth company was stationed. There literally was left no space to step foot in the whole blindage: it was so choked with soldiers up to the very entrance. On one side was burning a crooked tallow dip, which a soldier was holding, while lying down, to throw light on a book from which another soldier was reading by syllables. Near the candle in the stifling half-light of the blindage were seen craning heads, eagerly listening to the reader. The book was a primer. Upon entering the blindage, Kozeltsóv heard the following:

"Pray-er aft-er study. I thank Thee, Cre-a-tor —"

"Snuff the candle!" said a voice. "It is a fine book."

"My — God —" continued the reader.

When Kozeltsóv asked for the sergeant, the reader stopped, the soldiers began to stir, to clear their throats, and to sniffle, as is always the case after a repressed conversation; the sergeant, buttoning himself, rose near the group around the reader, and, stepping over and upon the legs of those who could not find a place to draw them back, went out to the officer.

"Good evening, brother! Is this all our company?"

"I wish you health! I congratulate your Honour upon your arrival!" answered the sergeant, looking merrily and in a friendly manner at Kozeltsóv. "How is your health, your Honour? Thank God. It was dull without you."

It was evident that Kozeltsóv was loved by his company.

In the depth of the blindage could be heard voices: "The old captain is back, the one that was wounded, Kozeltsóv, Mikháylo Seménych," and so forth; some even moved toward him, and his drummer saluted him.

"Good evening, Obanchúk!" said Kozeltsóv. "Are you hale? Good evening, boys!" he then said, raising his voice.

"We wish you health!" was roared forth in the blindage.

"How are you getting on, boys?"

"Poorly, your Honour. The French are getting the best of us, that's bad; they are shooting from behind the entrenchment, and that's all! They do not come out into the field."

"Maybe, with God's aid, it will be my luck to see them come out into the field, boys!" said Kozeltsóv. "It will not be our first time; we will stab them again."

"It will give us pleasure to do our best," said several voices.

"He is, really, brave," said a voice.

"He is mightily brave!" said the drummer, not aloud, but audibly enough, turning to another soldier, as though finding his justification in the words of the commander of the company, and convincing him that there was nothing boastful and improbable in these words.

From the soldiers, Kozeltsóv passed over to the defensive barracks, to his fellow officers.

XVI.

In the large room of the barracks there was an immense throng of naval, artillery, and infantry officers. Some were asleep, others conversed, sitting on a caisson and the carriage of a fortress cannon; others again, forming the largest and noisiest group under the vault, were seated on the floor, on two spread felt mantles, drinking porter and playing cards.

"Ah, Kozeltsóv, Kozeltsóv! It is good of you to have come, you are a brave fellow! — How is the wound?" they said on all sides. It was evident that they liked him here, too, and that they were glad to see him back.

Having pressed the hands of his acquaintances, Kozeltsóv joined the noisy group, which was formed by several officers playing cards. Among them also were his acquaintances. A handsome, sparse, dark-complexioned man, with a long thin nose and long moustache standing out from his cheeks, was keeping bank with his white thin fingers, on one of which was a large gold ring with a coat of arms. He was paying bank, thrusting the money straight and irregularly, evidently agitated by something, though he wished to appear careless. Near him, on his right, lay, leaning on his arm, a gray-haired major, who with an affectation of cold-bloodedness punted at half a rouble, and immediately paid the stakes. On the left squatted an officer with a red, perspiring face, smiling forcedly, and jesting. When his cards were beaten, he kept moving one of his hands in the empty pocket of his

trousers. He was playing at large stakes, but obviously no longer with cash, and it was this which angered the handsome, dark-complexioned man. Up and down the room walked, with a large package of paper money in his hands, a bald-headed, haggard, pale officer, with a huge nose and mouth, and he constantly put up cash on the cards, and won the stakes.

Kozeltsóv took a drink of brandy and sat down near the players.

"Won't you take a punt, Mikhaíl Seménych?" the cashier said to him. "I suppose you have brought a pile of money with you."

"Where was I to get the money from? On the contrary, I spent the last in the city."

"I don't believe it! You must have fleeced somebody at Simferopol."

"Really, I have very little," said Kozeltsóv, but evidently not wishing to be taken at his word, he unbuttoned his coat, and took the old cards into his hands.

"Well, I'll try my luck; the devil sometimes plays funny tricks! Even a gnat, you know, can do things. Only I must fortify myself by a drink."

After taking another wine-glass of brandy and some porter, he in a short time lost his last three roubles.

Against the short perspiring officer was written one hundred and fifty roubles.

"No, I have no luck," he said, carelessly taking a new card.

"Will you kindly send it?" said the cashier, stopping for a moment in his dealing, and looking at him.

"Permit me to send it to-morrow," answered the perspiring officer, getting up and convulsively rummaging through his empty pocket.

"Hm!" grumbled the cashier, and, angrily dealing to the right and left, he gave out the whole pack. "But really, this won't do," he said, putting down his cards.

"I pass. This will not do, Zákhar Iványch," he added. "We were playing for cash, and not to charge up."

"Do you doubt me? That is strange!"

"From whom am I to get it?" growled the major, who had won something like eight roubles. "I have sent up more than twenty roubles, and having won I receive nothing."

"What am I to pay with when there is no money on the table?" said the cashier.

"That is not my business!" cried the major, rising. "I am playing with you, and not with them."

The perspiring officer suddenly became excited.

"I tell you I will pay to-morrow; how dare you, then, insult me?"

"I say what I please! That is no way of doing!" cried the major.

"Stop it, Fédor Fédorych!" they all said at once, keeping back the major.

But we will draw down the curtain over the scene immediately. To-morrow, maybe this very night, every one of these men will go merrily and proudly to meet death, and will die firm and calm; but the only consolation in life, under conditions that horrify the coldest imagination, when everything humane is absent and there is no hope of emerging from the horrors, — the only consolation is forgetfulness, the annihilation of consciousness. At the bottom of the soul of each of them lies a noble spark which will make a hero of him; but this spark is not burning brightly, — there will come the fatal moment, and it will burst into a flame and will illumine great deeds.

XVII.

On the following day the bombardment was continued with the same force. At about eleven o'clock in the morning, Volódya Kozeltsóv was sitting in the circle of the battery officers, and, having become a little accustomed to them, was watching the new faces, observing, questioning, and himself talking. The modest conversation of the artillerists, with a slight pretence at learning, impressed and pleased him, while the shy, innocent, handsome exterior of Volódya gained the officers' favour for him.

The older officer of the battery, a captain, — an undersized, red-haired man, with a tuft on his crown, and with smooth temples, brought up in the old traditions of the artillery, a lady's man and presumably learned, — was interested in Volódya's knowledge of artillery, asked him about new inventions, graciously jested about his youth and handsome face, and, in general, treated him like a son, which was extremely agreeable to Volódya.

Sub-Lieutenant Dyadénko, a young officer with a Little-Russian accent, in a torn overcoat and dishevelled hair, talked in a loud voice, was all the time looking for a chance for a heated dispute, and was quick in all his motions; but he nevertheless pleased Volódya, who could not help noticing under this coarse exterior a very good and exceedingly kind man. Dyadénko continually offered his services to Volódya, and proved to him that all the ordnance at Sevastopol was not placed according to the rules.

Lieutenant Chernovítski, with high arching eyebrows,

though more polite than the rest, and dressed in a fairly clean coat, which, if it was not new, was carefully mended, and showing a gold chain on his velvet waistcoat, did not please Volódya. He kept asking what the emperor and the Minister of War were doing, told him with an unnatural ecstasy the deeds of bravery which had been performed at Sevastopol, regretted the small number of real patriots, and, in general, displayed much learning, wit, and noble sentiments; but for some reason or other all this seemed disagreeable and unnatural to Volódya. The main thing was, he had observed that the other officers did not speak to Chernovítski. Yunker Vlang, whom he had awakened the day before, was there also. He did not say anything, but, sitting modestly in the corner, laughed whenever anything funny was said, reminded people of things they had forgotten, and passed the brandy and rolled the cigarettes for the officers. Whether it was the modest, civil bearing of Volódya, who treated him like an officer, and did not disdain him like a boy, or whether it was his pleasant exterior, which so captivated Vlánga (as the soldiers called him, for some reason or other making his name a feminine),—he did not take his large kindly eyes away from the new officer, guessed and anticipated all his wishes, and all the time dwelt in a kind of amorous transport, which, of course, the officers noticed and ridiculed.

Before dinner the staff-captain was relieved in the bastion, and he joined their company. Staff-Captain Kraut was a blond, handsome, audacious officer, with long sandy moustache and whiskers; he spoke Russian excellently, but a little too well and too regularly for a Russian. In his service and in life he was the same as with his language; he served beautifully, was an excellent companion, a most reliable man in monetary affairs; but simply, as a man, even because everything was so good, there was something lacking. Like all Russian Germans he was,

in strange contradistinction to the ideal German Germans, in the highest degree practical.

"Here he is coming, our hero!" said the captain, as Kraut entered the room, waving his arms and clattering with his spurs. "What do you prefer, Friedrich Krestyánych, tea or brandy?"

"I have ordered tea got ready for me, but in the meantime I will take a dram to soothe my spirit. Very happy to make your acquaintance; I beg you to have me in your graces," he said to Volódya, who, rising, saluted him. "Staff-Captain Kraut — The cannoneer in the bastion told me that you arrived yesterday."

"I am very much obliged to you for your bed: I slept on it."

"But did you rest well? One of its legs is broken; but there is no time to fix it, — we are in a stage of siege, — something ought to be put under."

"Have things gone well while you were on duty?" asked Dyadénko.

"Passable. Only Skvortsóv caught it, and one gun-carriage was mended yesterday. They had smashed the cheek into splinters."

He rose from his seat and began to walk around; it was evident he was under the influence of the pleasant sensation of a man who has just escaped a danger.

"Well, Dmítri Gavrílych," he said, shaking the captain's knees, "how are you getting on? How is your advancement? Still mum?"

"Nothing yet."

"And there will be nothing," said Dyadénko. "I have proved it to you before."

"Why not?"

"Because you did not make the right report."

"Always disputing!" said Kraut, smiling merrily. "You are a real stubborn Little-Russian! And just to annoy you, you will get a lieutenancy."

"No, I won't."

"Vlang! Please fetch my pipe, and fill it for me," he said, turning to the yunker, who obligingly ran away to fetch the pipe.

Kraut animated them all: he told of the bombardment, asked for the news during his absence, and talked with everybody.

XVIII.

"WELL? Are you all settled here, among us?" Kraut asked Volódya. "Pardon me, what is your name and patronymic? Such is the custom with us, in the artillery. Have you supplied yourself with a riding-horse?"

"No," said Volódya, "I do not know what to do. I told the captain that I had no horse and no money, unless I got my forage and travelling money. I should like for the time being to ask the commander of the battery for a horse, but I am afraid he will refuse it."

"Apollón Sergyéich!" and he produced a sound with his lips, expressive of strong doubt, and glanced at the captain. "Hardly!"

"Well, if he does refuse, there will be no great misfortune," said the captain. "To tell the truth, no horses are needed here. Still, we might try; I will ask him to-day."

"You evidently do not know him," Dyadénko put in his word. "Whatever else he may refuse, he will not refuse the horse. Do you want to wager?"

"Of course, you must contradict, as usual."

"I contradict because I know. He is stingy on everything else, but he will give horses, because it is not to his interest to refuse them."

"How can he help refusing them when oats are at eight roubles?" said Kraut. "It is to his interest not to keep a superfluous horse!"

"Ask for Starling, Vladímir Seménych!" said Vlang, returning with Kraut's pipe. "It is an excellent horse."

"From which you fell into a ditch at Magpie-ville? Ah? Vlánga?" remarked the staff-captain.

"What of it if oats are at eight roubles, as you say," Dyadénko continued to dispute, "if he marks it down at ten and a half. Of course it is to his interest."

"Why should there not something stick to his hands? If you were the commander of a battery, you would not let a horse go down-town!"

"When I shall be commander of a battery, my horses will get four measures of grain a day, and I will not make anything on them."

"We shall see," said the staff-captain. "You will do just the same, and so will he, when he commands a battery," he added, pointing to Volódya.

"What makes you think, Friedrich Krestyánych, that he will take advantage of his position?" Chernovítski chimed in. "Maybe he has wealth of his own, and won't have to take advantage."

"No, I — pardon me, captain," said Volódya, blushing up to his ears. "I regard this as ignoble."

"Oho! He has grit!" said Kraut.

"It seems to me like this: if it is not my money, I have no right to take it."

"But let me tell you something, young man," the captain began, in a more serious tone. "You know, that when you command a battery, nothing will be said, provided you do things right; the commander of the battery does not interfere with the commissary stores of the soldiers, — such has been the custom in the artillery since time immemorial. If you are a poor master, you will have nothing left. Now, this is what you have to spend money on, contrary to regulations: for shoeing — one (he bent one finger); for the drugs — two (he bent another finger); for the chancery — three; for off horses you have to pay as high as five hundred roubles apiece, my dear — that is four; you must change the soldiers'

collars; much money goes for coal; you board the officers. If you are a commander of a battery, you have to live in proper style: you need a carriage, a fur coat, and this and that — what is the use of mentioning it all?"

"But above everything else," interrupted the captain, who had all the time kept silent. "You must consider this, Vladímir Seménych: take a man like me, — he has to serve twenty years, first at a salary of two hundred, and then at three hundred roubles. Why should he not in his old age provide a piece of bread for himself?"

"What's the use of talking?" again spoke the staff-captain. "Don't be in a hurry to pass an opinion. Serve awhile, and then judge."

Volódya was dreadfully embarrassed and ashamed for having expressed himself without proper consideration, and he mumbled something and continued to listen in silence, while Dyadénko was with the greatest passion disputing the matter and proving the opposite.

The discussion was interrupted by the appearance of the colonel's orderly, calling to dinner.

"Tell Apollón Sergyéich to serve some wine," said Chernovítski, buttoning his coat, to the captain. "What makes him so stingy? If he is killed, nobody will get anything!"

"Tell him yourself!"

"No, you are the senior officer: it is necessary to have order in everything."

XIX.

THE table was removed from the wall, and covered with a soiled cloth, in the very room where Volódya had reported to the colonel the evening before. The commander of the battery this time gave him his hand, and asked him about St. Petersburg and the journey.

"Well, gentlemen, he who drinks brandy, let him help himself. Ensigns don't drink," he added, smiling.

The commander of the battery did not seem as stern as on the previous day; on the contrary, he had the appearance of a kind, hospitable host and a senior comrade of the officers. Nevertheless, all the officers, from the old captain down to Ensign Dyadénko, expressed their great respect for him, by their manner of speech, while looking deferentially into his eyes, and by the shy reserve with which they went up one after another to take a drink of brandy.

The dinner consisted of a large bowl of beet soup, in which swam around fat pieces of beef and an immense quantity of pepper and laurel leaves, of Polish forcemeat with mustard, and of tripe with not very fresh butter. There were no napkins, the spoons were of tin and wood, there were only two glasses, and on the table stood only a decanter of water with a broken neck; but the dinner was not dull: the conversation never flagged.

At first, the conversation turned on the battle at Inkerman, in which the battery had taken part; each one gave his impressions and reflected on the causes of its failure, and stopped speaking, every time the commander had

anything to say; then the conversation naturally passed to the insufficiency of the calibre of the light guns, and to the new lighter cannon, which gave Volódya a chance to display his knowledge of artillery. The conversation did not dwell on the present terrible condition of Sevastopol, as though each had been thinking too much of the subject to mention it. Similarly, the duties of the service, which were to devolve on Volódya, were not referred to at all, to his surprise and mortification, as though he had arrived in Sevastopol only to tell of the lighter guns, and to dine with the commander of the battery. During their dinner, a bomb fell not far from the house where they were sitting. The floor and walls shook as from an earthquake, and the windows were shrouded by a powder smoke.

"I suppose you have not seen anything like this in St. Petersburg; here we get such surprises often," said the commander of the battery.

"Vlang, go and see where it has exploded."

Vlang went out and reported that it was in the square, and that was the last thing said about the bomb.

Just before the end of the dinner, an old man, the scribe of the battery, entered the room with three sealed envelopes, which he handed to the commander of the battery.

'This one is very pressing. A Cossack has brought it from the chief of artillery."

All the officers looked in impatient expectancy at the fingers of the commander, which were quite used to breaking such seals, and which took out the very pressing document. "What could it be?" each one asked himself. It might mean leaving Sevastopol altogether, taking a rest, or an order for the whole battery to take up positions in the bastions.

"Again!" said the commander of the battery, angrily flinging the paper on the table.

"What is it, Apollón Sergyéich?" asked the senior officer.

"They are asking for an officer with the crew for some mortar battery. As it is, I lack four officers and the crew for the full complement," grumbled the commander of the battery, "and they want to take away another — Well, somebody will have to go, gentlemen," he said, after a moment's silence. "The order is to be on the barricade at seven o'clock — Send for the sergeant! Gentlemen, who will go? Decide," he repeated.

"He has not been yet," said Chernovítski, pointing to Volódya.

The commander of the battery made no reply.

"Yes, I should like to," said Volódya, feeling a cold perspiration on his back and neck.

"Why should he?" the captain interrupted him. "Of course, no one will refuse, neither would one beg for the favour; if Apollón Sergyéich leaves the matter to us, let us cast lots, as we did the last time."

Everybody agreed to it. Kraut cut some slips of paper, rolled them up, and threw them into a cap. The captain was playful and even had the courage to ask the colonel for some wine, in order to brace himself, as he said. Dyadénko was gloomy, Volódya had a smile on his face. Chernovítski insisted that he would have to go, and Kraut was entirely at ease.

Volódya was the first to draw. He picked up a paper which was longer than the rest, but it suddenly occurred to him to exchange it for another, which was smaller and thinner, and, upon opening it, he read, "To go!"

"I have to," he said, with a sigh.

"Well, God protect you! You'll get your fire baptism at once," said the commander of the battery, glancing with a kindly smile at the disturbed face of the ensign. "Get ready at once! To make it more cheerful for you, Vlang will go with you as gun-sergeant."

XX.

VLANG was exceedingly well satisfied with his appointment, ran at once to get ready, and, all dressed up, came back to help Volódya; he tried to persuade him to take along a cot, a fur coat, some old numbers of the "Memoirs of the Fatherland," the coffee-pot with the spirit-lamp, and other unnecessary things. The captain advised Volódya first to read from the Manual about the firing from mortars, and to copy out the tables. Volódya at once sat down to work, and, to his agreeable surprise, he discovered that, although he was still disturbed by the terror of the danger and even more by his dread of being a coward, these feelings were not so powerful as on the previous day. This was partly due to the influence of daylight and his activity, and partly to the fact that fear, like every powerful sensation, cannot last in the same measure for any length of time. In short, he had emerged from his affright. At about seven o'clock, just as the sun was beginning to set behind the Nicholas barracks, the sergeant entered and announced that the men were in readiness, and waiting for him.

"I have given Vlánga the list. Please ask him for it, your Honour!" he said.

About twenty artillerymen, in short swords without their loading implements, were standing around the corner of the house. Volódya walked over to them with the yunker.

"Shall I deliver a short speech to them, or simply say, 'Good evening, boys!' and nothing else?" he thought.

"Why should I not say, 'Good evening, boys!' It is certainly proper." He boldly shouted in his sonorous voice, "Good evening, boys!" The soldiers cheerfully returned the greeting; his youthful, fresh voice rang agreeably to their ears.

Volódya marched briskly at the head of the soldiers, and though his heart beat as though he had run several versts at full speed, his gait was light and his face cheerful. As they were ascending the hill leading to the Malákhov Mound, he noticed that Vlang, who did not fall a step behind him, and who at home had the appearance of such a courageous man, constantly walked to one side and lowered his head, as though all the bombs and shells, which were whistling past with extraordinary frequency, were flying straight at him. A few of the soldiers acted in the same manner, and in most faces, in general, was expressed restlessness, if not fear. These circumstances completely calmed Volódya and gave him courage.

"So, here I am myself on the Malákhov Mound, which I had imagined a thousand times more terrible! I, too, can walk without stooping before the shells, and I am less frightened than the rest! So I am not a coward!" he thought, with delight and even with a certain measure of rapturous self-satisfaction.

This sentiment was soon shaken by the spectacle which he encountered at dusk in the Kornílov battery, while trying to find the chief of the bastion. Four sailors, near the breastwork, were holding a blood-stained corpse of a soldier without boots and overcoat, and were swinging it, in their attempt to throw it over the breastwork. (On the second day of the bombardment they did not in all places succeed in taking all the bodies away from the bastions, and so they threw them into the ditch in order to get them out of the way.)

Volódya stood petrified for a minute when he saw the

body strike the top of the breastwork and then roll down into the ditch; but, fortunately for him, he here met the chief of the bastion, who gave him his orders and provided him with a guide to take him to the battery and to the blindage intended for his crew. We shall not stop to tell how many more dangers and disenchantments our hero passed through on that night; how, instead of the firing which he had seen on the Volkhóv Field, under all the conditions of precision and order, which he had expected to find here, he found two smashed mortars, the mouth of one of which had been dented by a cannon-ball, while the other was standing on the splinters of a demolished platform; how he could not get any workmen before morning, in order to mend the platform; how not a single charge was of the weight laid down in the Manual; how two soldiers under his command were wounded; and how his life had been hanging on a hair more than twenty times.

Luckily he was assisted by a gun-captain of enormous size, a sailor, who had been with the mortars in the beginning of the siege, and who convinced him of the possibility of putting them in action. He led him, with a lamp in his hand, all night through the bastion, as though it were his garden, and promised to fix everything in the morning.

The blindage to which his guide took him had been dug out in the stony ground; it was an elongated ditch of about two cubic fathoms in size, covered with oak yard beams. Here he took up his position with all his soldiers. The moment Vlang caught sight of the low three-foot door of the blindage, he rushed headlong into it before all the rest, and almost hurt himself against the stone floor, in trying to reach the farthest corner, from which he did not emerge. When all the soldiers had seated themselves on the floor along the wall, and some of them had lighted their pipes, Volódya arranged his bed

in the corner, lighted a candle, began to smoke a cigarette, and lay down on the cot.

Above the blindage continuous reports were heard, but not very loudly except from one gun, which stood near by, and with its booming shook the blindage. In the blindage itself, everything was quiet; but now and then the soldiers, still feeling strange before their new officer, would talk softly to each other, asking this one to move a little and that one to give them a light for their pipes; or a rat was scratching somewhere between the stones; or Vlang, who had not yet regained his composure, and wildly looked about him, suddenly uttered a loud sigh. Volódya on his bed, in his quiet corner crowded by people and lighted up by one candle, experienced the sensation of comfort which used to come over him when as a child he played hide-and-seek and concealed himself in the safe, or under his mother's skirt, where, not daring to breathe, he listened attentively, and was afraid of the darkness, but at the same time derived pleasure from it. He was both a little ill at ease and cheerful.

XXI.

SOME ten minutes later the soldiers grew bolder, and began to converse. Near the light and the officer's bed, two soldiers of more importance, being cannoneers, had taken up their position: one of them was gray-haired and old, and had all the medals but the Cross of St. George; the other, a young cantonist,[1] was smoking twisted cigarettes. The drummer, as usual, took upon himself the duty of waiting on the officer. The bombardiers and cavaliers sat next, and farther in the shadow, near the door, the "submissive" took up their seats. It was among the latter that the conversation began. The cause for it was the noise produced by a man who darted into the blindage.

"Well, brother, you could not sit it out in the street? Are the girls singing merry songs?" said one voice.

"They are singing marvellous songs, such as we have never heard in the village," said, smiling, the man who had rushed into the blindage.

"Vásin is not fond of bombs, no, he isn't!" said one in the aristocratic corner.

"Well, when there is any need, it is a different matter!" slowly spoke Vásin, and whenever he said something, all the others kept silent. "On the 24th there was a terrible fire; but what is there bad in this? You will only be killed uselessly, and the authorities don't say 'Thanks' to us fellows for it."

[1] Soldiers brought up since early childhood in special colonies called cantons.

At these words of Vásin all laughed.

"Now there is Mélnikov, and he is all the time sitting outside," somebody remarked.

"Call him in, that Mélnikov," added the old cannoneer. "Really, he will be only killed, for nothing."

"Who is that Mélnikov?" asked Volódya.

"One of our foolish soldiers, your Honour. He is afraid of absolutely nothing, and is all the time walking about outside. You ought to see him: he looks just like a bear."

"He knows a charm," Vásin said, in a drawling voice, from the farther corner.

Mélnikov entered the blindage. He was stout (this is extraordinary among soldiers), red-haired, and red in his face, with an enormous arched brow, and bulging, light blue eyes.

"Are you afraid of the bombs?" Volódya asked him.

"What sense is there in being afraid of bombs?" replied Mélnikov, crouching, and scratching himself. "I sha'n't be killed by a bomb, I know that."

"So you would like to live here?"

"Of course, I should like to. It is jolly here!" he said, suddenly bursting forth in a laugh.

"Then we shall have to take you out on a sortie! If you want to, I will tell the general," said Volódya, though he did not know a single general.

"Why should I not want to go? I do want to!"

Mélnikov disappeared behind the others.

"Let us play at *noski*,[1] boys! Who has cards?" was heard his hurried voice.

Indeed, in a short time a game was started in the farther corner, and one could hear them striking the nose, laughing, and calling trumps. Volódya drank some tea from the samovár, which the drummer had made for him,

[1] A game at cards, in which the loser is struck on the nose with the cards.

treated the cannoneers, joked, talked with them, wishing to become popular with them, and was very much satisfied with the respect which they showed him. The soldiers, too, talked more freely when they noticed that their officer was a simple man. One of them was saying that the siege of Sevastopol would soon be raised, because a reliable naval man had told him that Constantine, the Tsar's brother, was coming to our relief with a Merican fleet, and that soon there would be made a truce not to fire for two weeks, and whosoever should fire would have to pay seventy-five kopeks for every shot.

Vásin, who, as Volódya could make out, was a small man, with large, kindly eyes and with whiskers, told, amidst a universal silence, and then laughter, how, when he had gone home on a leave of absence, they were at first delighted to see him, but how later his father sent him out to work and the forester sent his carriage for his wife. All this amused Volódya greatly. He not only did not experience the slightest fear or displeasure from the closeness and oppressive odour in the blindage, but everything was cheerful and pleasant to him.

Many soldiers were snoring. Vlang, too, had stretched himself out on the floor, and the old cannoneer, having spread his overcoat and making the sign of the cross, was mumbling some prayers before his sleep, when Volódya took it into his head to go out and see what was going on.

"Remove your legs!" the soldiers cried to each other, when he got up, and the legs drew back and made a way for him.

Vlang, who seemed to be asleep, suddenly raised his head and took Volódya by the fold of his overcoat.

"Don't go, I beg you! What's the use?" he said, in a tone of tearful persuasiveness. "You do not know, evidently, that the shells are falling there all the time· it is better here."

In spite of Vlang's entreaties, Volódya made his way out of the blindage, and sat down on the threshold, where Mélnikov was already sitting.

The air was pure and fresh, — especially as compared with the blindage, — and the night was clear and calm. Amidst the roar of the cannonade could be heard the sounds of the wheels and carts that brought the gabions, and the conversation of the men working on a powder-room. Overhead was the high starry heaven, through which constantly flashed the fiery streaks of the bombs; toward the left, at a distance of three feet, a small opening led into another blindage, in which could be seen the legs and backs of the sailors who were living in it, and could be heard their voices; in front was visible the elevation of the powder-room, past which flitted the figures of stooping men, and on the very summit of which, under the bullets and bombs which uninterruptedly whistled about that place, stood a tall form in a black mantle, with its hands in its pockets, stamping down the earth which others brought there in bags. Quite frequently a bomb flew by and burst near the powder-room. The soldiers who were carrying the dirt crouched and sidled, but the black figure did not move; it continued to stamp down the earth with its feet, remaining all the time in one spot.

"Who is that black figure?" Volódya asked of Mélnikov.

"I do not know. I will go and see."

"Don't go! It is unnecessary."

But Mélnikov paid no attention, got up, walked over to the man in black, and for quite awhile stood just as unconcerned and immovable near him.

"He is in charge of the powder-room, your Honour!" he said, upon returning. "The powder-room has been torn up by a bomb, so the infantrymen are putting on some earth."

Occasionally the bombs flew straight at the door of the blindage, it seemed. Then Volódya pressed himself into the corner, and again came out to see whether they were flying in his direction. Though Vlang, inside the blindage, entreated him several times to come back, Volódya remained about three hours on the threshold, experiencing a certain pleasure in tempting fate, and watching the flight of the bombs. Toward the end of the evening he was able to make out how many guns were in operation, and where they were stationed, and where the projectiles lodged.

XXII.

On the following day, the 27th, Volódya, after a ten hours' sleep, went out early in the morning on the threshold of the blindage, feeling refreshed and full of life. Vlang came out with him, but at the first sound of a bullet he rushed headlong into the opening of the blindage, making a way for himself with his head, amidst the universal laughter of the soldiers, most of whom had come out into the fresh air. Only Vlang, the old cannoneer, and a few others rarely went out into the trench; it was impossible to keep the others back: all of them rushed out of the foul blindage into the fresh morning air, and, in spite of the bombardment, which continued as severe as on the previous day, they lay down near the threshold and the breastwork. Mélnikov had been strolling along the batteries ever since daybreak, glancing upwards with indifference.

Near the threshold sat two old soldiers and a young curly-headed Jew, who had been detailed from the infantry. This Jew picked up a bullet, which was lying near him, and with a piece of iron flattened it against a stone; then he cut out of it with a knife a cross resembling the Cross of St. George; the others were talking and watching his work. The cross was really well made.

"If we are to stay here any length of time," said one of them, "we shall get our discharge as soon as peace is concluded."

"Of course. I have only four years left to my discharge, and I have passed five months in Sevastopol."

"That does not count toward the discharge, do you hear?" said another.

Just then a cannon-ball whistled past the heads of the speakers, and struck the ground within three feet of Mélnikov, who was walking up to them in the trench.

"It almost killed Mélnikov," said one.

"No, it won't," replied Mélnikov.

"Here, take this cross for your bravery," said the young soldier who had made the cross, and handed it to Mélnikov.

"No, brother, here a month is counted a year, — there was such an order," they continued their conversation.

"Take it as you please, but as soon as peace is concluded, there will be a review by the Tsar at Warsaw, and if they will not give us our discharge, they will give us an unlimited leave of absence."

Suddenly a whining, deflected bullet flew above the heads of the speakers, and struck against a stone.

"If you don't look out, you will get a clear discharge before evening," said one of the soldiers.

Everybody laughed.

And not as late as the evening, but two hours later, two of them received a clear discharge, and five were wounded; but the rest joked as before.

In the morning two mortars were so far mended that it was possible to shoot from them. At about ten o'clock, the order having been received from the chief of the bastion, Volódya called out his command, and with it went to the battery.

Not a particle of that feeling of fear, which had been expressed in the soldiers' faces the evening before, when they first came out for their work, was noticeable in them now. Vlang alone could not control himself: he kept hiding and crouching as before, and Vásin lost

something of his composure, and was flurried and constantly squatted. But Volódya was in a rapturous state: the thought of danger did not even occur to him. The joy of doing his duty, of finding himself not only not a coward, but even a brave man, the sensation of commanding, and the presence of twenty men, who, he knew, watched him with curiosity, made of him a gallant fellow. He was even proud of his bravery, showed off before his soldiers, walked out on the banquette, and purposely unbuttoned his overcoat so that he could be easily noticed. The chief of the bastion, who at this time was making the round of his estate, as he expressed himself, though he had become accustomed to all kinds of bravery in the last eight months, could not help admiring this handsome boy, in his unbuttoned overcoat, beneath which could be seen a red shirt clasping a white, tender neck, with his face and eyes aflame, clapping his hands, and commanding in a sonorous voice, "First, second!" and gaily rushing out on the breastwork to see where his bomb would settle. At half-past eleven the firing died down on both sides, and precisely at twelve o'clock began the storming of the second, third, and fifth bastions of the Malákhov Mound.

XXIII.

On the nearer side of the bay, between Inkerman and the Northern fortification, on a telegraph mound, two sailors were standing about noon; one, an officer, was looking through the telescope at Sevastopol, and the other had just come on horseback to the high post with a Cossack.

The sun stood bright and high above the bay, which was resplendent with a gay, warm sheen, as it swayed its moored ships and moving sails and boats. A light breeze barely rustled the leaves of the withering oak brush near the telegraph, filled the sails of the boats, and rocked the waves. Sevastopol, the same as before, with its unfinished church, its column, its quay, its boulevard, gleaming in its green colour on the hill, its artistic library building, its diminutive azure inlets, filled with masts, its picturesque aqueduct arches, and its clouds of blue powder smoke, now and then illuminated by the purple flame of the gun fires, — the same proud, festive Sevastopol, surrounded on one side by yellow smoking hills, and on the other by the bright green sea glimmering in the sun, was visible on the other side of the bay.

Above the horizon of the sea, where a streak of black smoke rose from a steamer, crept a long white cloud, portending a wind. Along the whole line of the fortifications, especially along the hills on the left side, constantly puffed up masses of thick, compressed white smoke, several at a time, accompanied by flashes which now and then gleamed forth even in the bright midday light; they

spread, assuming various forms, rose in the air, and were tinged with darker hues against the sky. These puffs, flashing now here, now there, had their birth on the hills, in the batteries of the enemy, in the city, and high up in the air. The sounds of explosions were never interrupted, and, mingling, shook the air.

About noon the puffs of smoke became rarer and rarer, and the atmosphere was less shaken by the booming of the cannon.

"The second bastion is not returning the fire at all," said the officer of the hussars, who was on horseback. "It is all smashed! It is terrible!"

"And Malákhov seems to be returning one shot to three of theirs," said the one who was looking through the telescope. "It drives me wild to hear their silence. They are continually hitting the Kornílov battery, but there is no reply."

"Just see! I told you that they always stopped bombarding about noon. It is just so to-day. Come, let us ride to our breakfast — they are waiting for us — there is no use looking —"

"Wait, don't bother me!" answered the one who was watching through the glasses, looking with unusual curiosity at Sevastopol.

"What is it? What?"

"There is some motion in the trenches: they are marching in close columns."

"That can be seen with the naked eye," said the sailor. "They are marching in columns. I must give a signal."

"Look there, look! They have come out of the trenches."

In fact, it could be seen with the naked eye that dark spots were moving down the hill, across the ravine, from the French batteries to the bastions. In front of these dots could be observed dark streaks near our line. In the bastions the white smoke of shots puffed up in different

places, as though running across. The wind carried the sound of an uninterrupted musketry fire, like the pattering of the rain against the window-panes. The black streaks moved about in the smoke, coming nearer and nearer. The sounds of the fusilade, growing stronger and stronger, blended into one prolonged, rumbling peal. The smoke, rising more and more frequently, passed rapidly along the line and finally fused into one contracting and expanding lilac cloud, in which now and then flashed fires and black dots. All the sounds were united in one rumbling, crackling noise.

"An assault!" said the officer, with a pale face, passing the telescope to the sailor.

Cossacks galloped by along the road. Officers on horseback, the commander-in-chief in a carriage and accompanied by his suite, passed by. On each face could be seen heavy agitation and breathless expectancy.

"It is impossible they should have taken it!" said the officer on horseback.

"Upon my word, a banner! Look! look!" said the other, choking with excitement and going away from the telescope. "A French banner on Malákhov Mound."

"Impossible!"

XXIV.

Kozeltsóv the elder, who had managed in the night to win back all he had lost and again to lose everything, even the gold coins which were sewn into the lining, was early in the morning sleeping an unhealthy, oppressive, but profound sleep in the defensive barracks of the fifth bastion when, repeated by different voices, the fatal cry was passed.

"Alarm!"

"Get up, Mikháylo Seménych! There is an assault!" shouted somebody.

"Some schoolboy," he said, incredulously, opening his eyes.

But suddenly he saw an officer who was running without any obvious purpose from one corner into another and with such a pale face that he understood everything. The thought that he might be taken for a coward who did not wish to go out with his company at a critical minute affected him powerfully. He flew to his company at full speed. The firing from the ordnance had stopped, but the crackling of the musketry fire was at full blast. The bullets whistled not one at a time, as from carbines, but in swarms, like birds of passage in the autumn, flying overhead. The whole place, where the day before had stood his battalion, was shrouded in smoke, and there were heard discordant cries and shouts. Soldiers, wounded and not wounded, he encountered in throngs. After running some thirty paces more he saw his company pressing against the wall.

"They have taken Schwartz," said a young officer. "Everything is lost!"

"Nonsense," he said, angrily, drawing his small dull iron sword and shouting:

"Forward, boys! Hurrah!"

His voice was loud and sonorous. It awoke Kozeltsóv himself. He ran ahead along the traverse. About fifty soldiers rushed after him. He ran out from behind the traverse upon the open square. Bullets flew literally like hail. Two of them struck him; but where, and what they had done, whether they had bruised or wounded him, he had no time to decide. In front of him he could in the smoke see blue uniforms, red trousers, and hear the sounds of a foreign speech. One Frenchman was standing on the breastwork, waving his cap and shouting something. Kozeltsóv was convinced that he would be killed, and this gave him more courage. He ran forward, ever onward. A few soldiers outran him. Other soldiers appeared from both sides and were running too. The blue uniforms remained at the same distance, running from him back to their trenches, but under his feet he stepped on wounded and dead soldiers. Having reached the outer ditch everything became confused in Kozeltsóv's eyes and he felt a pain in his breast.

Half an hour later he lay on a stretcher near the Nicholas barracks and he knew that he was wounded; but he felt hardly any pain. All he wanted was to get something cold to drink and to lie down quietly.

A short fat doctor with large black whiskers went up to him and unbuttoned his overcoat. Kozeltsóv looked down his chin at what the doctor was doing with his wound and at the doctor's face, but he felt no pain. The doctor covered the wound with the shirt, wiped his fingers on the folds of his overcoat, and silently, without looking at the wounded officer, walked over to another. Kozeltsóv unconsciously followed with his eyes everything that

was going on in his presence, and, recalling what had happened in the fifth bastion, thought with an extremely pleasant sensation of self-satisfaction of his having well executed his duty, of having for the first time during his service acted well, and of having no cause whatsoever for regrets. The doctor, who was dressing the wound of another wounded soldier, pointed to Kozeltsóv and said something to a priest with a long red beard who was standing near by with a cross.

"Shall I die?" Kozeltsóv asked the priest, when the latter went up to him.

The priest did not reply, but said a prayer, and handed the cross to the wounded man.

Death did not frighten Kozeltsóv. He took the cross with his feeble hands, pressed it to his lips, and sobbed.

"Well, have the French been repulsed?" he firmly asked the priest.

"Victory is entirely with us," replied the priest, in order to console the wounded man, concealing from him the fact that on Malákhov Mound the French banner was already floating.

"Thank God," said the wounded man, unconscious of the tears that coursed down his cheeks.

The thought of his brother for an instant crossed his mind. "God grant him the same good fortune!" he thought.

XXV.

But a different fate awaited Volódya. He was listening to a fable, which Vásin was telling him, when there came the shout, "The French are coming!" The blood rushed at once to Volódya's heart, and he felt his cheeks grow cold and pale. He remained motionless for a second; but, on looking around, he saw that the soldiers were buttoning their overcoats with a great deal of composure, and leaving the blindage one after another; one of them, Mélnikov in all probability, said, jestingly:

"Meet them with bread and salt, boys!"

Volódya crept with Vlang, who did not leave him a pace's length, out of the blindage, and ran to the battery. There was no artillery fire, neither on this, nor on the other side. He was roused not so much by the sight of the soldiers' composure, as at the yunker's pitiable, undisguised cowardice. "Is it possible I could be like him?" he thought, and cheerfully ran to the breastwork, near which stood his mortars. He could plainly see how the French were running straight at him across the clear space, and how crowds of them, with their bayonets gleaming in the sun, were stirring in the nearest trenches.

A short, broad-shouldered man, in a zouave uniform and short sword, was running in front and leaping over ditches. "Fire the canister-shot!" shouted Volódya, running down from the banquette; but the soldiers had taken measures without him, and the metallic sound of the discharged canister-shot whistled over his head, first from one mortar, and then from the other. "The first!

The second!" commanded Volódya, running along from one mortar to another, entirely forgetful of the danger. On both sides of him were heard the crackling of the musketry fire of our epaulement, and the shouts of bustling people.

Suddenly a piercing cry of despair, repeated by several voices, was heard on the left: "They are outflanking us! They are outflanking us!" Volódya turned back to look in the direction of the cries. Some twenty Frenchmen appeared from behind. One of them, with a black beard, a handsome man, was in the lead; having run up to within ten steps of the battery, he stopped and fired straight at Volódya, then again ran toward him. For a second Volódya stood as if petrified, and did not trust his eyes. When he regained his senses and looked around, the blue uniforms appeared in front of him, on the breastwork; and within ten paces of him two Frenchmen were spiking a cannon. Around him was no one but Mélnikov, who had been killed at his side, and Vlang, who had seized a handspike and, with a furious expression on his face and with downcast pupils, had rushed forward.

"Follow me, Vladímir Seménych! After me!" cried the desperate voice of Vlang, who was flourishing the handspike in the face of the Frenchmen who had come up from behind. The furious figure of the yunker baffled them. To the one in front he dealt a blow on the head, the others involuntarily stopped, and Vlang, continually looking around and crying, "After me, Vladímir Seménych! Why do you stand? Run!" dashed down to the trench, where lay our infantry, shooting at the French. After leaping into the trench, he again raised his head from it, to see what his beloved ensign was doing. Something, wrapped in an overcoat, was lying prone in the place where Volódya had been standing, and all that place was occupied by Frenchmen firing at us.

XXVI.

VLANG found his battery on the second defensive line. Out of the number of twenty soldiers who had been with the mortar battery, only eight had saved themselves.

At nine o'clock in the evening, Vlang with his battery crossed to the Northern side on a steamer that was filled with soldiers, guns, horses, and wounded. There was no firing. The stars gleamed brightly in the sky as on the previous night; but a stiff breeze was agitating the sea. In the first and second bastions fires flashed low to the ground; explosions shook the air and illuminated about them strange black objects and the stones that were flying in the air. Something was on fire near the docks, and the red flames were reflected in the water. The bridge, filled with people, was lighted up by the fire from the Nicholas battery. A large flame seemed to be hovering over the water on the distant promontory of the Alexander battery, illuminating the lower part of a cloud of smoke that hung over it, and the same quiet, bold, distant fires glimmered on the sea from the hostile fleet. A fresh breeze swayed the bay. In the light of the burning structures could be seen the masts of our sinking vessels disappearing deeper and deeper in the water.

There was no conversation on deck; only, between the even sounds of the parted waves and the puffing chimney, one could hear the horses snorting and stamping their feet on the ferry, the orders of the captain, and the groans of the wounded. Vlang, who had not eaten anything the whole day, drew a piece of bread from his pocket and

Interior of the Redan after the final assault.

began to munch it, but suddenly he thought of Volódya, and began to weep so loudly that the soldiers, who sat near him, could hear it.

"I declare, our Vlánga is eating bread by himself and weeping by himself," said Vásin.

"Wonderful!" said another.

"See there, they have set fire to our barracks," continued he, sighing. "How many of our brothers have lost their lives there! And after all the French got it!"

"At least we got out alive, and the Lord be praised for that!" said Vásin.

"Still it is aggravating!"

"What is aggravating? Do you suppose *he* will have an easy time here? Not a bit of it! You will see, ours will take it back! No matter how many of us shall be killed, let God want it, and the emperor wish it, and it will be retaken! Do you think we will leave it to *him?* Not a bit of it! Nothing but the bare walls left: the bulwarks are blown up — *he* has placed his pennon on the Mound, but dares not go down to the city."

"Just wait, we will square up accounts with you, — just give us a chance," he concluded, addressing the Frenchmen.

"Of course we will!" said another, with conviction.

All along the bastions of Sevastopol, which had for so many months been boiling with such extraordinary energetic life, which had for so many months seen heroes taking the place of those who had been killed, only to die themselves, and which for so many months had inspired terror, hatred, and finally the raptures of the enemy, all along the bastions of Sevastopol there was nobody left. Everything was dead, wild, terrible, but not quiet; the work of destruction was still going on. On the uneven ground, ploughed up by new explosions, lay everywhere twisted gun-carriages, jamming down the corpses of Russian and French soldiers; heavy cast-iron

cannon, for ever silenced and by a tremendous force hurled down into ditches and half-covered with dirt, bombs, shells; again corpses, ditches, splinters of beams, of blindages, and again silent corpses in gray and blue overcoats. All this was frequently convulsed and illuminated by the purple flame of explosions, which continued to shake the air.

The enemies saw that something incomprehensible was taking place in Sevastopol. These explosions and the dead silence in the bastions made them shudder; but they did not dare to believe, under the influence of the quiet, forceful defence of the day, that their imperturbable foe had disappeared, and they awaited in silence, without stirring, and with trepidation, the end of the gloomy night.

The army of Sevastopol, like the sea in a gloomy, billowing night, surging and receding, and agitatedly quivering in all its mass, swaying near the bay, on the bridge and on the Northern side, moved slowly in the impenetrable darkness, away from the place, where it had left so many brave brothers, — away from the place, which had been watered by its blood, — from the place, which for eleven months had withstood an enemy twice as numerous, and which now it was to abandon without a battle.

The first impression of this order was incomprehensibly heavy for every Russian. The next feeling was a fear of being pursued. Men felt themselves defenceless the moment they left the places where they had been accustomed to fight, and with trepidation crowded at the entrance of the bridge, which swayed in the stiff breeze. Clanking their bayonets against each other, crowding between the baggage and ordnance, the infantry were making their way with difficulty; officers on horseback carrying orders pushed their way through the masses; the inhabitants and orderlies, with their baggage which was not permitted across, wept and entreated in vain; the

artillery, with rattling wheels, descended to the bay, hastening to get away as soon as possible.

Aside from their different absorbing occupations, the feeling of self-preservation and the desire to get away at once from this terrible place of death was present in the soul of each. This feeling was present in the mortally wounded soldier, lying among five hundred similarly wounded men, on the stony ground of the St. Paul's quay and asking for death; in the reserve militiaman, using his utmost effort to press himself into the dense throng, in order to make way for the general on horseback; in the general, superintending with firmness the retreat across the bay, and restraining the undue haste of the soldiers; in the sailor, caught in the moving battalion and almost choked to death by a swaying throng; in the wounded officer, carried on a stretcher by four soldiers, who, oppressed by the congested mass, put him down on the ground near the Nicholas battery; in the artillerist, who, having served with his gun for sixteen years, was now executing an order of his superiors, quite incomprehensible to him, and with the aid of his comrades pushing the gun down the steep embankment into the bay; and in the sailors of the fleet, who, having scuttled their vessels, were giving way on the boats in which they were rowing away from them.

Upon reaching the other side of the bridge, nearly every soldier took off his cap and made the sign of the cross. But behind this feeling was another, oppressive, gnawing, deeper feeling, one that resembled repentance, shame, and anger. Nearly every soldier, looking from the Northern side upon deserted Sevastopol, sighed with an inexpressible bitterness in his heart, and swore vengeance on the foe.

THE CUTTING OF THE FOREST

The Story of a Yunker
1854–1855

THE CUTTING OF THE FOREST

The Story of a Yunker

I.

In midwinter of 185– the division of our battery was doing frontier service in the Great Chechnyá. Having learned, on the evening of the 14th of February, that the platoon, which I was to command in the absence of the officer, was detailed for the following day to cut timber, and having received and given the proper orders on that very evening, I repaired earlier than usual to my tent; as I did not have the bad habit of warming it up with burning coal, I lay down in my clothes on my bed, which was constructed of paling, drew my lambskin cap down to my eyes, wrapped myself in a fur coat, and fell into that peculiar, profound, and heavy sleep which one sleeps in moments of alarm and agitation before an imminent peril. The expectancy of the engagement of the following day had induced that condition in me.

At three o'clock in the morning, while it was still very dark, somebody pulled the warm fur coat from me, and the purple light of a candle disagreeably startled my sleepy eyes.

"Please get up!" said somebody's voice. I closed my

eyes, unconsciously pulled the fur coat over me, and again fell asleep. "Please get up!" repeated Dmítri, pitilessly shaking me by the shoulder. "The infantry is starting." I suddenly recalled the actuality, shuddered, and sprang to my feet. Having swallowed in a hurry a glass of tea and washed myself with ice-crusted water, I went out of the tent and walked over to the park (the place where the ordnance is stationed).

It was dark, misty, and cold. The night fires, which glimmered here and there in the camp, lighting up the figures of the drowsy soldiers who were lying about them, only intensified the darkness by their purple glamour. Near by one could hear the even, calm snoring of men; in the distance there was the motion, talking, and clanking of the infantry's weapons, getting ready for the march; there was an odour of smoke, dung, slow-matches, and mist; a morning chill ran down one's back, and one's teeth involuntarily clattered against each other.

By the snorting and occasional stamping alone could one make out, in this impenetrable darkness, where the hitched-up limbers and caissons were standing, and only by the burning dots of the linstocks could one tell where the ordnance was. With the words, "God be with you!" the first gun began to clatter, then the caisson rattled, and the platoon was on the move. We took off our hats and made the sign of the cross. Having taken up its position among the infantry, the platoon stopped, and for about fifteen minutes awaited the drawing up of the whole column and the arrival of the commander.

"We lack one soldier, Nikoláy Petróvich!" said, approaching me, a black figure, which I recognized by the voice only as being that of the platoon gun-sergeant, Maksímov.

"Who is it?"

"Velenchúk is not here. As we were hitching up, he was here, and I saw him, but now he is gone."

As there was no reason to suppose that the column would march at once, we decided to send Lance Corporal Antónov to find Velenchúk. Soon after, several horsemen galloped past us in the darkness: that was the commander with his suite; immediately there was a stir, the van of the column started, and then we began to march, — but Antónov and Velenchúk were not with us. We had scarcely taken one hundred steps, when both soldiers caught up with us.

"Where was he?" I asked of Antónov.

"Asleep in the park."

"Is he drunk?"

"No, sir."

"Why, then, did he go to sleep?"

"I can't tell you."

For something like three hours we moved slowly in the same silence and darkness over unploughed, snowless fields and low bushes, which crackled under the wheels of the ordnance. Finally, after fording a shallow, but extremely rapid torrent, we halted, and in the van could be heard intermittent volleys of musketry. These sounds, as always, had an awakening effect upon all. The detachment seemed to have wakened from slumber: in the ranks could be heard conversation, animation, and laughter. Some soldiers were wrestling with their comrades; others leaped now on one foot, now on another; others again were munching their hardtack, or, to pass the time, pretended to stand sentry or keep time walking. In the meantime the mist was becoming perceptibly white in the east, the dampness grew more penetrating, and the surrounding objects emerged more and more from the darkness. I could discern the green gun-carriages and caissons, the brass of the ordnance, covered by a misty dampness, the familiar forms of my soldiers, and the bay horses, which I had involuntarily learned to know down to their minutest details, and the rows of the infantry,

with their sparkling bayonets, knapsacks, wad-hooks, and kettles over their backs.

Shortly afterward we were again put in motion, taken a couple of hundred steps across the field, and had a place pointed out to us. On the right could be seen the steep bank of a winding brook and tall wooden posts of a Tartar cemetery; on the left and in front of us shimmered a black streak, through the mist. The platoon came down from the limbers. The eighth company, which was flanking us, stacked arms, and a battalion of soldiers went into the woods with guns and axes.

Less than five minutes had elapsed when on all sides crackled and burned camp-fires; the soldiers scattered about them, fanning the fire with their hands and feet, carrying boughs and logs, and in the forest resounded without interruption hundreds of axes and falling trees.

The artillerists, vying with the infantrymen, had made a fire of their own, and though it was burning so well that it was impossible to come within two paces of it, and a dense smoke was passing through the ice-crusted branches, from which drops fell sizzling into the fire, and which the soldiers kept pressing down with their feet, and though coal had formed underneath the fire, and the grass was burnt white all around it, — the soldiers were not yet satisfied; they dragged up whole logs, threw steppe-grass upon it, and fanned it more and more.

As I went up to the camp-fire to light a cigarette, Velenchúk, who was always officious, but who now, having failed in his duty, was unduly busy about the fire, in an attack of zeal pulled out with his naked hand a burning coal from the very middle, and, vaulting it a couple of times from one hand to another, threw it down on the ground.

"You had better light a stick and hand it," said some one.

"Hand him the linstock, boys!" cried another.

When I finally lighted my cigarette without Velenchúk's aid, who was again ready to pick up the coal with his hands, he wiped his singed fingers against the hind skirts of his fur coat, and, evidently anxious to be doing something, lifted a large plane-tree log and flung it into the fire with all his might. When, at last, it seemed to him that it was time to rest himself, he went up as near as he could to the burning wood, spread his overcoat, which he wore like a mantle on the back button, extended in front of him his large black hands, and, distorting his mouth a little, blinked with his eyes.

"Ah, I have forgotten my pipe. That's bad, brothers!" he said, after a moment's silence, and addressing no one in particular.

II.

In Russia there are three prevailing types of soldiers, among which may be classed the soldiers of all the armies: of the Caucasus, the line, the guards, the infantry, the cavalry, the artillery, and so forth.

These chief types, capable of many subdivisions and blendings, are the following:

(1) The submissive.
(2) The commanding.
(3) The desperate.

The submissive soldiers may be subdivided into (*a*) indifferently submissive and (*b*) busily submissive.

The commanding may be subdivided into (*a*) austerely commanding and (*b*) sagaciously commanding.

The desperate may be subdivided into (*a*) desperate jokers and (*b*) desperate debauchees.

The commonest type is a gentle, sympathetic type, which unites the best Christian virtues, meekness, piety, patience, and submission to the will of God, and is that of the submissive in general. The distinctive features of an indifferently submissive soldier are an imperturbable calm and contempt for all the vicissitudes of fortune to which he may be subjected. The distinctive feature of the submissive drunkard is a quiet, poetical inclination and sentimentality. The distinctive feature of the busily submissive is a limited mental capacity, united with an aimless industry and zeal.

The commanding type is found preponderantly in the higher spheres of the non-commissioned officers, among

corporals, under-officers, sergeants, and so forth. Among these, the austerely commanding type is noble, energetic, preëminently martial, and not devoid of high poetical impulses. To this type belonged Corporal Antónov, with whom I intend to acquaint the reader. The second subdivision is formed by the sagaciously commanding, who of late have been getting quite common. A sagaciously commanding non-commissioned officer is always eloquent, knows how to read and write, wears a pink shirt, does not eat from the common kettle, at times smokes Musát tobacco, considers himself incomparably higher than a common soldier, and is rarely as good a soldier as the commanding of the first order.

The desperate type, like the commanding type, is good only in the first subdivision: the distinctive traits of desperate jokers are their imperturbable cheerfulness, their ability to do everything, a well-endowed nature, and dashing spirit of adventure; this type is just as dreadfully bad in the second subdivision of desperate debauchees, who, however, to the honour of the Russian army be it said, occur very rarely, and wherever they are found are removed from companionship by the community of the soldiers themselves. The chief characteristics of this subdivision are faithlessness and a certain adventurousness in vice.

Velenchúk belonged to the order of the busily submissive. He was a Little-Russian by birth, fifteen years in active service, and though not a very fine-appearing man, and not a very agile soldier, he was simple-hearted, kindly, overzealous, though generally inopportunely so, and exceedingly honest. I say "exceedingly honest," because the year before there had been an incident when he had very palpably displayed this characteristic quality. It must be remarked that nearly every soldier has some trade; the most popular trades are those of a tailor and a shoemaker. Velenchúk had learned the first, and, to

judge from the fact that Sergeant Mikhaíl Doroféich himself had him make his clothes for him, he must have reached a certain artistic perfection in it.

The year before, while in camp, Velenchúk had undertaken to make a fine overcoat for Mikhaíl Doroféich; but in the night, when, after cutting the cloth and fixing the lining, he lay down to sleep with the goods under his head, a misfortune befell him: the cloth, which had cost seven roubles, had disappeared. With tears in his eyes, trembling lips, and restrained sobs, Velenchúk announced the fact to the sergeant. Mikhaíl Doroféich was furious. In the first moment of his anger he threatened the tailor, but later, being a man of means, and good at heart, he dropped the whole matter and did not ask any restitution of the value of the overcoat. However much bustling Velenchúk fretted and wept, as he was telling about his misfortune, the thief did not show up. Though there were strong suspicions against a desperate debauchee of a soldier, Chernóv by name, who was sleeping in the same tent with him, there were no positive proofs. The sagacious commander, Mikhaíl Doroféich, being a man of means and in some kind of partnership with the superintendent of arms and the steward, the aristocrats of the battery, very soon completely forgot the loss of that particular overcoat; Velenchúk, on the contrary, could not forget his misfortune. The soldiers said that they were afraid all the time that he would lay hands on himself or run away into the mountains, for this unfortunate accident had affected him powerfully. He did not eat, nor drink; he could not work, and wept all the time. Three days later he appeared before Mikhaíl Doroféich, and, all pale, drew with trembling hands a gold coin out of his rolled up sleeve, and handed it to him.

"Upon my word, this is all I have, Mikhaíl Doroféich, and I have borrowed it from Zhdánov," he said, sobbing again. "The two roubles that are wanting I will give

you, upon my word, as soon as I have earned them. He" (Velenchúk himself did not know who that "he" was) "has made me out a thief in your eyes. His vile, contemptible soul has taken the last thing away from his brother soldier; here I have been serving fifteen years, and —" To Mikhaíl Doroféich's honour, it must be said that he did not take from him the lacking two roubles, though Velenchúk offered them to him two months later.

III.

Besides Velenchúk, five other soldiers of my platoon were warming themselves at the fire.

In the best place, protected from the wind, on a cask, sat the gun-sergeant of the platoon, Maksímov, smoking a pipe. In the pose, the look, and all the motions of this man could be observed the habit of commanding and the consciousness of his personal dignity, even independently of the cask, on which he was sitting, and which, at a halt, formed the emblem of authority, and of the nankeen-covered fur half-coat.

When I came up, he turned his head toward me; but his eyes remained fixed upon the fire, and only much later did they follow the direction of his head, and rest upon me. Maksímov was a freeman; he was possessed of some means, had taken instruction in the school of the brigade, and had picked up some information. He was dreadfully rich and dreadfully learned, as the soldiers expressed themselves.

I remember how once, at gun-practice with the quadrant, he explained to the soldiers who were crowding around him that the level was "nothing else than that it originates because the atmospheric quicksilver has its motion." In reality, Maksímov was far from being stupid, and he knew his work very well, but he had an unfortunate peculiarity of speaking at times purposely in such a way that it was totally impossible to understand him, and so that, as I am convinced, he did not understand his own words. He was especially fond of the

words "originates" and "to continue," and when he introduced his remarks with "originates" and "continuing," I knew in advance that I should not understand a word of what followed. The soldiers, on the contrary, so far as I was able to observe, liked to hear his "originates," and suspected that a deep meaning lay behind it, though, like myself, they did not comprehend a word. They referred this lack of comprehension to their own stupidity, and respected Fédor Maksímych the more for it. In short, Maksímych was a sagacious commander.

The second soldier, who was taking off the boots from his red, muscular legs, was Antónov, the same bombardier Antónov, who in the year '37, having been left with two others at a gun, without protection, had kept up a fire against a numerous enemy, and, with two bullets in his hip, had continued to attend to the gun and load it. "He would have been a gun-sergeant long ago, if it were not for his character," the soldiers would say of him. Indeed, his was a strange character: in his sober mood there was not a quieter, prompter, and more peaceful soldier; but when he became intoxicated, he was an entirely different man: he did not respect the authorities, brawled, fought, and was an altogether useless soldier. Not more than a week before he had gone on a spree during Butter-week, and, in spite of all threats, persuasions, and calls to duty, he continued his drunken bouts and brawls until the first Monday in Lent. But during the whole fast, in spite of the order for all men in the division to eat meat, he lived on nothing but hardtack, and in the first week he did not even take the prescribed dram of brandy. However, it was only necessary to see this undersized figure, built as though of iron, with his short, crooked legs and shining, whiskered face, take into his muscular hands the balaláyka, while under the influence of liquor, and, carelessly casting his glances to both sides, strum some "lady's" song, or, to see him,

his overcoat, with the decorations dangling from it, thrown over shoulder, and his hands thrust into the pockets of his blue nankeen trousers, stroll down the street, — it was only necessary to see the expression of military pride and contempt of everything un-military, which was displayed in his face at such a time, in order to understand how utterly impossible it was for him to keep from fighting at such a moment an impertinent or even innocent orderly, who got in his way, or a Cossack, a foot-soldier, or settler, in general one who did not belong to the artillery. He fought and was turbulent not so much for his own amusement, as for the sake of supporting the spirit of the whole soldierhood, of which he felt himself to be a representative.

The third soldier, with an earring in one ear, bristly moustache, a sharp, birdlike face, and a porcelain pipe between his teeth, who was squatting near the fire, was the artillery-rider Chíkin. The dear man Chíkin, as the soldiers called him, was a joker. Whether in bitter cold, or up to his knees in mud, for two days without food, in an expedition, on parade, at instruction, the dear man always and everywhere made faces, pirouetted with his feet, and did such funny things that the whole platoon roared with laughter. At a halt or in camp there was always around Chíkin a circle of young soldiers, with whom he played cards; or he told them stories about a cunning soldier and an English milord, or imitated a Tartar or a German, or simply made his own remarks, which caused them nearly to die with laughter. It is true, his reputation as a joker was so well established in the battery that it was enough for him to open his mouth and wink, in order to provoke a general roar of laughter; but there was really something truly comical and unexpected in all he said and did. In everything he saw something especial, something that would not have occurred to anybody else, and what is more important, this

ability to see something funny did not fail him under any trial.

The fourth soldier was a homely young lad, a recruit of the last year's draft, who was now for the first time taking part in an expedition. He was standing in the smoke, and so close to the fire that it looked as though his threadbare fur coat would soon ignite; but, notwithstanding this, it was evident, from the way he spread the skirts of his coat, from his self-satisfied pose with his arching calves, that he was experiencing great pleasure.

And, finally, the fifth soldier, seated a little distance from the fire, and whittling a stick, was Uncle Zhdánov. Zhdánov had seen more service than any other soldier in the battery; he had known them all as recruits, and they called him uncle, from force of habit. It was reported that he never drank, nor smoked, nor played cards (not even *noski*), nor ever swore. All his time which was free from military service he spent in plying the shoemaker's trade; on holidays he went to church, whenever it was possible, or placed a kopek taper before the image, and opened the psalter, the only book which he could read. He associated little with the soldiers: he was coldly respectful to those who were higher in rank but younger in years; his equals he had little chance to meet, since he did not drink; but he was especially fond of recruits and young soldiers, — he always protected them, read the instructions to them, and frequently aided them. Everybody in the battery considered him a capitalist because he was possessed of twenty-five roubles with which he was prepared to assist those who really needed assistance. That same Maksímov, who was now gun-sergeant, told me that when he had arrived ten years ago as a recruit, and the older soldiers, who were given to drinking, drank up with him all the money he had, Zhdánov, noticing his unfortunate plight, called him up, upbraided him for his conduct, even gave him some blows, read him the instruction about

the behaviour of a soldier, and sent him away, giving him a shirt, for Maksímov had got rid of his, and half a rouble in money.

"He has made a man of me," Maksímov would say of him, with respect and gratitude. He had also helped Velenchúk, whom he had protected ever since he arrived as a recruit, at the time of the unfortunate loss of the overcoat, and he had aided many, many more during his twenty-five years of service.

It was impossible to expect in the service a man who knew his business better, or a soldier who was braver and more precise; but he was too meek and retiring to be promoted to the rank of gun-sergeant, though he had been bombardier fifteen years. Zhdánov's one pleasure, and even passion, was songs; he was especially fond of some of them, and he always gathered a circle of singers from among the young soldiers, and, though he could not sing himself, stood behind them, and, putting his hands into the pockets of his fur coat, and closing his eyes, expressed his satisfaction by the movement of his head and cheeks. I do not know why, but for some reason or other I discovered much expression in this even movement of the cheeks under his ears, which I had observed in nobody else but him. His snow-white head, his moustache dyed black, and his sunburnt, wrinkled face gave him, at first sight, a stern and austere expression; but, upon looking more closely into his large, round eyes, especially when they were smiling (he never smiled with his lips), you were impressed by something extraordinarily meek and almost childlike.

IV.

"Ah, I have forgotten my pipe. That's bad, brothers," repeated Velenchúk.

"You ought to smoke cigars, dear man!" remarked Chíkin, screwing up his mouth and winking. "I always smoke cigars at home; they are sweeter."

Of course, everybody rolled in laughter.

"So you forgot your pipe," interrupted Maksímov, not paying any attention to the general merriment, and, with the air of a superior, proudly knocking out the ashes by striking the pipe against the palm of his left hand. "What have you been doing there? Eh, Velenchúk?"

Velenchúk turned half-around to him, put his hand to his cap, and then dropped it.

"You evidently did not get enough sleep yesterday, and so you are now falling asleep standing. You won't get any reward for such behaviour."

"May I be torn up on the spot, Fédor Maksímych, if I have had a drop in my mouth; I do not know myself what is the matter with me," replied Velenchúk. "What occasion did I have to get drunk?" he muttered.

"That's it. One has to be responsible for you fellows before the authorities, and you keep it up all the time,— it is disgusting," concluded eloquent Maksímov, but in a calmer tone.

"It is really wonderful, brothers," continued Velenchúk, after a moment's silence, scratching the back of his head, and not addressing any one in particular. "Really, it is wonderful, brothers! Here I have been sixteen years in

the service, and such a thing has never happened to me before. When we were ordered to get ready for the march, I got up as usual, — there was nothing the matter; but suddenly it caught me in the park — it caught me and threw me down on the ground, and that was all — And I myself do not know how I fell asleep, brothers! It must be the sleeping disease," he concluded.

"Yes, I had a hard time waking you," said Antónov, pulling on his boot. "I kept pushing and pushing you, as though you were a log!"

"I say," remarked Velenchúk, "just as though I were drunk —"

"There was a woman at home," began Chíkin, "who had not left the oven bed for at least two years. They began to wake her once, thinking that she was asleep, but they found she was dead, — though her death resembled sleep. Yes, my dear man!"

"Just tell us, Chíkin, how you put on style when you had your leave of absence," said Maksímov, smiling and looking at me, as though to say, "Would you not like to hear the story of a foolish man?"

"What style, Maksímych?" said Chíkin, casting a cursory side glance at me. "I just told them all about the Caucasus."

"Of course, of course! Don't be so shy — tell us how you led them on."

"It is very simple: they asked me how we were living," Chíkin began, speaking hurriedly, having the appearance of a man who has told the same story several times. "I said: 'We live well, dear man: we get our provisions in full, — in the morning and evening of chocolate a cup to each soldier is brought up; and for dinner we get soup, not of oats, but of noble barley groats, and instead of brandy we get a cup of Modeira, Modeira Divirioo which, without the bottle, is at forty-two!'"

"Great Modeira!" shouted Velenchúk, louder than the rest, and bursting out laughing. "That's what I call Modeira!"

"Well, and did you tell them about the Esiatics?" Maksímov continued his inquiry, when the general laughter had subsided.

Chíkin bent down toward the fire, got a coal out with a stick, put it in his pipe, and for a long while puffed in silence his tobacco roots, as though unconscious of the silent curiosity of his hearers. When he finally had puffed up sufficient smoke, he threw away the coal, poised his cap farther back on his head, and, shrugging his shoulder and lightly smiling, he continued. "'What kind of a man is your small Circassian down there?' says one. 'Or is it the Turk you are fighting in the Caucasus?' Says I: 'Dear man, there is not one kind of Circassians down there, but many different Circassians there are. There are some mountaineers who live in stone mountains, and who eat stone instead of bread. They are big,' says I, 'a big log in size; they have one eye in the middle of the forehead,' and they wear red caps that glow like yours, dear man!" he added, addressing a young recruit, who, in fact, wore a funny little cap with a red crown.

At this unexpected turn, the recruit suddenly sat down on the ground, slapped his knees, and burst out laughing and coughing so hard that he could hardly pronounce with a choking voice, "Those are fine mountaineers!"

"'Then there are the Boobies,'" continued Chíkin, with a jerk of his head drawing his cap back on his forehead, "'these are twins, wee little twins, about this size. They always run in pairs, holding each other's hands,' says I, 'and they run so fast that you can't catch them on horseback.' 'Are those Boobies,' says one, 'born with clasped hands, my dear fellow?'" Chíkin spoke in a guttural

bass, as though imitating a peasant. "'Yes,' says I, 'dear man, he is such by nature. If you tear their hands apart, blood will ooze out, just as from a Chinaman; if you take off their caps, blood will flow.' 'Now tell me, good fellow, how do they carry on war?' says he. 'Like this,' says I, 'if they catch you, they slit open your belly, and begin to wind your guts about your arms. They wind them, but you laugh and laugh, until you give up the ghost—'"

"Well, did they believe you, Chíkin?" said Maksímov, with a slight smile, while the others were rolling in laughter.

"They are such strange people, Fédor Maksímych. They believe everything, upon my word, they do. But when I began to tell them about Mount Kazbék, telling them that the snow did not melt all summer there, they ridiculed me. 'Don't tell such fibs, good fellow,' they said. 'Who has ever heard such a thing: a big mountain, and the snow not melting on it! Why, even with us the snow melts on the mounds long before it has melted in the hollows.' So, go and explain matters to them," concluded Chíkin, winking.

V.

THE bright disk of the sun, shining through the milk-white mist, had risen quite high; the grayish-violet horizon was widening all the time, and though it was farther away, it was also sharply closed in by the deceptive white mist wall.

In front of us, beyond the forest which had been cut down, there was opened up a fairly large clearing. Over the clearing there spread on all sides the smoke from the fires, now black, now milk-white, now violet, and the white layers of the mist were forming themselves into fantastic shapes. Far in the distance, occasionally appeared groups of Tartar horsemen, and were heard the infrequent reports of our carbines, and their guns and cannon.

"This was not yet an engagement, but mere child's play," as the good Captain Khlópov used to say.

The commander of the ninth company of sharpshooters, who were to flank us, walked up to the guns, pointed to three Tartar horsemen, who were at that time riding near the forest, at a distance of more than six hundred fathoms from us; he asked me, with that eagerness to see an artillery fire which is characteristic of all infantry officers in general, to give them a shot or a shell.

"Do you see," he said, with a kindly and convincing smile extending his hand from behind my shoulder, "there where the two high trees are? One of them, in front, is on a white horse, and dressed in a white mantle, and there, behind him, are two more. Do you see them? Couldn't you just —"

"And there are three others, riding near the forest," added Antónov, who had remarkably sharp eyes, approaching us, and concealing behind his back the pipe which he had been smoking. "The one in front has just taken out the gun from its case. You can see him plainly, your Honour!"

"I say, he has fired it off, brothers! There is the white puff of the smoke," said Velenchúk, in a group of soldiers who were standing a short distance behind us.

"He must have aimed at our cordon, the rascal!" remarked another.

"See what a lot of them the forest is pouring out. I suppose they are trying to find a place to station their cannon," added a third. "If we could just burst a shell in the midst of them, — that would make them spit — "

"What is your opinion? will it reach so far, dear man?" asked Chíkin.

"Five hundred or five hundred and twenty fathoms, not more," Maksímov said, coolly, as though speaking to himself, though it was evident that he was anxious to fire off the cannon, as the rest were. "If we were to give forty-five lines to the howitzer, we might hit it, — hit it square in the middle."

"Do you know, if you were to aim straight at this group, you would certainly hit somebody. See how they have all gathered in a mass! Now, quickly, give the order to fire," the commander of the company continued his entreaties.

"Do you order the gun to be aimed?" Antónov suddenly asked, in a jerky bass voice, with gloomy malice in his eyes.

I must confess that I myself was anxious for it, and so I ordered that the second cannon be brought into position.

No sooner had I given the order than the shell was

powdered, and rammed in, and Antónov, clinging to the gun-cheek, and placing his two fat fingers on the carriage-plate, was ordering the block-trail to the right and left.

"A trifle more to the left — a wee bit to the right — now, the least little bit more — now it's all right," he said, walking away from the gun with a proud face.

The infantry officer, I, and Maksímov, one after another put our eyes to the sight, and each expressed his particular opinion.

"Upon my word, it will carry across," remarked Velenchúk, clicking with his tongue, although he had only been looking over Antónov's shoulder, and therefore did not have the least reason for such a supposition. "Upon my word, it will carry across, and will strike that tree, brothers!"

"Second!" I commanded.

The crew stepped aside. Antónov ran to one side, in order to see the flight of the projectile; the fuse flashed, and the brass rang out. At the same time we were enveloped in powder-smoke, and through the deafening boom of the report was heard the metallic, whizzing sound of the projectile, flying with the rapidity of lightning, dying away in the distance amid a universal silence. A little behind the group of the horsemen appeared white smoke, the Tartars galloped away in both directions, and we heard the sound of the explosion.

"That was fine! How they are scampering! See, the devils don't like it!" were heard the approvals and jests in the ranks of the artillery and infantry.

"If we had aimed a little lower, we should have hit *him* straight," remarked Velenchúk. "I told you it would strike the tree, and so it did, — it went to the right."

VI.

LEAVING the soldiers to discuss the flight of the Tartars when they saw the shell, and why they were riding there, and how many of them still might be in the woods, I walked away with the commander of the company a few steps to one side, and seated myself under a tree, waiting for the warmed forcemeat cutlets which he had offered me. The commander of the company, Bolkhóv, was one of those officers who, in the regiment, are called "*bonjours*." He had means, had served in the guards, and spoke French. Yet, notwithstanding this, his comrades liked him. He was quite clever, and had enough tact to wear a St. Petersburg coat, to eat a good dinner, and to speak French, without unduly offending the society of his fellow officers. After speaking of the weather, of military engagements, of our common acquaintances among the officers, and convincing ourselves, by our questions and answers, and by our view of things, that there was a satisfactory understanding between us, we involuntarily passed to a more intimate conversation. Besides, in the Caucasus, among people of the same circle naturally arises the question, though not always expressed, "Why are you here?" To this silent question my companion, so it seemed to me, was trying to give a reply.

"When will this frontier work end?" he said, lazily. "It is dull!"

"Not to me," said I. "It is more tiresome on the staff."

"Oh, on the staff it is ten thousand times worse," he said, angrily. "No, when will all this end?"

"What is it you want to end?"

"Everything, altogether! — Are the cutlets ready, Nikoláev?" he asked.

"Why did you go to the Caucasus to serve, if the Caucasus is so displeasing to you?"

"Do you know why?" he replied, with absolute frankness. "By tradition. In Russia, you know, there exists an exceedingly strange tradition about the Caucasus, as though it were a promised land for all kinds of unhappy people."

"Yes, that is almost true," I said, "the greater part of us — "

"But what is best of all," he interrupted me, "is, that all of us who come to the Caucasus make dreadful mistakes in our calculations. Really, I can't see why, on account of an unfortunate love-affair or disorder in money matters, one should hasten to serve in the Caucasus rather than in Kazán or Kalúga. In Russia they imagine the Caucasus as something majestic, with eternal virgin snows, torrents, daggers, cloaks, Circassian maidens, — all this is terrifying, but, really, there is nothing jolly in it. If they only knew that you never are in the virgin snows, and that there is no special pleasure in being there, and that the Caucasus is divided into Governments, Stavrópol, Tiflís, and so forth — "

"Yes," I said, laughing, "in Russia we take an entirely different view of the Caucasus from what we do here. Have you not experienced this? when you read poetry in a language that you do not know very well, you imagine it to be much better than it really is — "

"I don't know, only I have no use for the Caucasus," he interrupted me.

"No, not so with me. I like the Caucasus even now, but differently — "

"Maybe the Caucasus is all right," he continued, as though provoked a little, "but I know this much: I am not good for the Caucasus."

"Why not?" I asked, in order to say something.

"Because, in the first place, it has deceived me. All that from which I had come away to be cured in the Caucasus, as the tradition has it, has followed me up here, — but with this difference. Formerly I was led to it on a large staircase, and now it is a small, dirty staircase, at each step of which I find millions of petty annoyances, meanness, insults; in the second place, because I feel that I am every day falling morally lower and lower, and, what is most important, because I feel unfit for this kind of service; I am unable to bear danger — I am simply not a brave man —"

He stopped and looked earnestly at me.

Although this unasked-for confession surprised me very much, I did not contradict him, as my interlocutor had evidently expected me to do, but awaited from him the refutation of his own words, which is always forthcoming under such circumstances.

"Do you know, I am to-day taking part in an action for the first time since I have been in the frontier guard," he continued, "and you will hardly believe what happened to me yesterday. When the sergeant brought the order that my company was to be in the column, I grew as pale as a sheet, and was unable to speak from trepidation. And if you only knew what a night I have passed! If it is true that people grow gray from fright, I ought to be entirely white to-day, for not one man condemned to death has suffered so much in one night as I have; though I am feeling a little more at ease now than I did in the night, it still goes around here," he added, moving his clinched hand in front of his breast. "Now this is certainly ridiculous," he continued, "a most terrible drama is being played here, and I myself am eating cutlets with onions, and persuading myself that all this is very gay. Have you any wine, Nikoláev?" he added, with a yawn.

"There *he* is, brothers!" was heard at that moment the

alarmed voice of one of the soldiers, and all eyes were directed to the edge of the far-off forest.

In the distance rose a bluish cloud of smoke, borne upwards by the wind, and constantly growing larger. When I understood that this was a shot which the enemy had aimed at us, everything that was before my eyes, everything suddenly assumed a new and majestic character. The stacked guns, and the smoke of the camp-fires, and the blue sky, and the green gun-carriages, and the sunburnt, whiskered face of Nikoláev, — everything seemed to tell me that the cannon-ball which had emerged from the smoke and which at that moment was flying through space might be directed straight at my breast.

"Where did you get your wine?" I asked Bolkhóv, lazily, while in the depth of my soul two voices were speaking with equal distinctness; one said, "Lord, receive my soul in peace," and the other, "I hope I shall not cower, but smile as the ball flies past me," and at the same instant something dreadfully disagreeable whistled over our heads, and struck the ground within two steps of us.

"Now, if I were a Napoleon or a Frederick," Bolkhóv remarked at that time, turning toward me with extraordinary composure, "I should utter some witticism."

"But you have told one just now," I replied, with difficulty concealing the alarm caused within me by the danger just past.

"Even if I have, nobody will make a note of it."

"I will."

"Yes, if you make a note of it, it will be to put in a critical paper, as Míshchenkov says," he added, smiling.

"Pshaw, you accursed one!" said Antónov, who was sitting behind us, angrily spitting to one side, "just missed my legs."

All my endeavours to appear cool and all our cunning phrases suddenly seemed intolerably stupid after this simple-hearted exclamation.

VII.

THE enemy had really stationed two guns where the Tartars had been riding, and every twenty or thirty minutes they sent a shot at our wood-cutters. My platoon was moved out into the clearing, and the order was given to return the fire. At the edge of the forest appeared a puff of smoke, there was heard a discharge, a whistling, — and the ball fell behind or in front of us. The projectiles of the enemy lodged harmlessly, and we had no losses.

The artillerists conducted themselves well, as they always did, loaded expeditiously, carefully aimed at the puffs of smoke, and quietly joked each other. The flanking infantry detachment lay near us, in silent inaction, waiting for their turn. The wood-cutters did their work: the axes sounded through the woods faster and more frequently; only, whenever the whistling of the projectile was heard, everything suddenly grew quiet, and amid the dead silence could be heard the not very calm voices, "Get out of the way, boys!" and all eyes were directed toward the ball, ricocheting over the fires and the brush.

The fog was now completely lifted, and, assuming the forms of clouds, was slowly disappearing in the dark blue vault of the sky; the unshrouded sun shone brightly and cast its gleaming rays on the steel of the bayonets, the brass of the ordnance, the thawing earth, and the sparkling hoarfrost. The air was brisk with the freshness of the morning frost, together with the warmth of the vernal sun; thousands of different shadows and hues were mingled in the dry leaves of the forest, and on the hard shin-

ing road were distinctly visible the traces of the wheel tires and horse-shoe sponges.

Between the troops the motion grew more animated and more noticeable. On all sides flashed more and more frequently the bluish puffs of the discharges. The dragoons, with the pennons fluttering from their lances, rode out in front; in the companies of the infantry, songs were started, and the wagons with the wood were being drawn up in the rear. The general rode up to our platoon, and ordered us to get ready for the retreat. The enemy took up a position in the bushes, opposite our left flank, and began to harass us with musketry-fire. On the left side a bullet whizzed by from the forest and struck a gun-carriage, then a second, a third — The flanking infantry, which was lying near us, rose noisily, picked up their guns, and formed a cordon. The fusilade grew fiercer, and the bullets kept flying oftener and oftener. The retreat began, and, consequently, the real engagement, as is always the case in the Caucasus.

It was quite evident that the artillerists did not like the bullets, as awhile ago the foot-soldiers had enjoyed the cannon-balls. Antónov frowned. Chíkin imitated the sound of the bullets and made fun of them; but it was apparent that he did not like them. Of one he said, "What a hurry it is in!" another he called a "little bee;" a third one, which flew over us slowly, and whining pitifully, he called an "orphan," which provoked a universal roar.

The recruit, who was not used to this, bent his head aside and craned his neck every time a bullet passed by, which, too, made the soldiers laugh. "Is it an acquaintance of yours, that you are bowing to it?" they said to him. Velenchúk, who otherwise was exceedingly indifferent to danger, now was in an agitated mood: he was obviously angry because we did not fire any canister-shot in the direction from which the bullets proceeded. He

repeated several times, in a discontented voice: "Why do we let *him* shoot at us for nothing? If we trained our gun upon him, and treated him to a canister-shot, he probably would stop."

It was indeed time to do so. I ordered the last shell let out, and a canister-shot loaded.

"Canister-shot!" cried Antónov, lustily, before the smoke had dispersed, and walking up with the sponge to the gun the moment the shell had been discharged.

Just then I suddenly heard a short distance behind me the ping of a whizzing bullet striking against something. My heart was compressed. "It seems to me it has struck somebody," I thought, but at the same time I was afraid to turn around, under the influence of a heavy presentiment. Indeed, immediately following upon this sound was heard the heavy fall of a body, and "Oh, oh, oh!" the piercing cry of a wounded man. "It has struck me, brothers!" uttered with difficulty a voice which I recognized. It was Velenchúk. He lay flat on his back between the limber and the gun. The cartridge-box which he carried was thrown to one side. His forehead was blood-stained, and down his right eye and nose ran the thick red blood. The wound was in the abdomen, but he had hurt his forehead in his fall.

All this I found out much later; in the first moment I saw only an indistinct mass, and a terrible lot of blood, as I thought.

Not one of the soldiers, who were loading the gun, said a word, only the recruit mumbled something like, "I say, all bloody," and Antónov, scowling, angrily cleared his throat; but it was manifest that the thought of death had passed through the mind of each. Everybody went to work with a vim. The gun was loaded in a twinkle, and the cannoneer, in bringing the shot, made a couple of steps around the place on which the wounded man lay groaning.

VIII.

Every one who has been in an action has no doubt experienced that strange and strong, though not at all logical, feeling of disgust with the place where one has been killed or wounded. In the first moment my soldiers were obviously experiencing this feeling, when it was necessary to lift up Velenchúk and carry him to the vehicle which had just come up. Zhdánov angrily went up to the wounded man, in spite of his increasing shrieks took him under his arms, and raised him. "Don't stand around! Take hold of him!" he shouted, and immediately some ten men, even superfluous helpers, surrounded him. But the moment he was moved away, Velenchúk began to cry terribly and to struggle.

"Don't yell like a rabbit!" said Antónov, rudely, holding his leg, "or we will throw you down."

The wounded man really quieted down, and only occasionally muttered, "Oh, I shall die! Oh, brothers!"

When he was laid on the vehicle he stopped groaning, and I heard him speaking with his comrades in a soft, but audible voice, — he evidently was bidding them goodbye.

During an action, nobody likes to look at a wounded man, and I, instinctively hastening to get away from this spectacle, ordered that he be taken at once to the ambulance, and walked over to the guns; but a few minutes later I was told that Velenchúk was calling me, and I went up to the vehicle.

In the bottom of it, clinging with both hands to the

edges, lay the wounded man. His healthy, broad face had completely changed in a few seconds: he looked rather haggard and had aged by several years; his lips were thin, pale, and compressed under an evident strain; the restless, dull expression of his glance had given way to a clear, quiet gleam, and on his blood-stained forehead and nose already lay the imprint of death.

Notwithstanding the fact that the least motion caused him untold sufferings, he asked them to remove the money-pouch which was tied around his left leg, below the knee.

A terrible oppressive sensation overcame me at the sight of his white healthy leg, when the boot was taken off, and the pouch was ungirded.

"Here are three roubles and a half," he said to me, as I took the purse into my hand; "you keep them for me."

The vehicle started, but he stopped it.

"I was making an overcoat for Lieutenant Sulimóvski. He has given me two roubles. For one rouble and a half I bought buttons; the remaining half-rouble is in the bag with the buttons. Give it to him!"

"Very well, very well," I said, "only get well, my friend!"

He made no reply; the vehicle started, and he again began to sob and groan in the most heartrending manner. It looked as though, having arranged all his worldly affairs, he no longer saw cause for restraining himself, and considered it permissible to alleviate his suffering.

IX.

"WHERE are you going? Come back! Where are you going?" I cried to the recruit, who, having put his reserve linstock under his arm, and with a stick in his hand, was coolly following the vehicle in which the wounded soldier was lying.

But the recruit only looked lazily at me, muttered something, and went ahead, so that I had to send a soldier after him. He doffed his red cap, and, smiling stupidly, gazed at me.

"Where are you going?" I asked.

"To the camp."

"What for?"

"Why, Velenchúk is wounded," he said, smiling again.

"What have you to do with that? You must remain here."

He looked at me in surprise, then coolly wheeled around, put on his cap, and went back to his place.

The engagement was favourable to us: it was reported that the Cossacks had made a fine attack and had taken three Tartar bodies; the infantry was provided with wood, and lost only six wounded, and in the artillery only Velenchúk and two horses were put out of action. To atone for these losses, they cut out about three versts of timber, and so cleared the place that it was impossible to recognize it: in place of the dense forest now was opened up an immense clearing, covered with smoking fires and with the cavalry and infantry moving toward the camp.

Although the enemy continued to harass us with artillery and musketry fire, until we reached the brook by the cemetery, where we had forded in the morning, the retreat was successfully accomplished. I was already beginning to dream of cabbage soup and a leg of mutton with buckwheat groats, which were awaiting me in the camp, when the information was received that the general had ordered the construction of redoubts, and that the third battalion of the K—— regiment and a detachment of four batteries were to remain here until to-morrow. The wagons with the wood and the wounded, the Cossacks, the artillery, the infantry with their guns, and wood on their shoulders, — all passed by us, with noise and songs. All faces expressed animation and pleasure, induced by the past danger and the hope for a rest. But the third battalion and we were to postpone these pleasant sensations for the morrow.

X.

WHILE we, of the artillery, were still busy about the ordnance, and placing the limbers and caissons, and picketing the horses, the infantry had stacked their arms, built camp-fires, constructed booths of boughs and corn-stalks, and were boiling their buckwheat grits.

It was growing dark. Pale blue clouds scudded over the sky. The fog, changed into a drizzly, damp mist, wet the earth and the overcoats of the soldiers; the horizon grew narrower, and the surroundings were overcast with gloomy shadows. The dampness, which I felt through my boots and behind my neck, the motion and conversation, in which I took no part, the viscous mud, in which my feet slipped, and my empty stomach, put me in a very heavy and disagreeable mood, after a day of physical and moral fatigue. Velenchúk did not leave my mind. The whole simple story of his military life uninterruptedly obtruded on my imagination.

His last minutes were as clear and tranquil as all his life. He had lived too honestly and too simply for his whole-souled faith in a future, heavenly life to be shaken at such a decisive moment.

"Your Honour," said Nikoláev, approaching me, "you are invited to take tea with the captain."

Making my way between the stacked arms and the fires, I followed Nikoláev to Bolkhóv's, dreaming with pleasure of a glass of hot tea and a cheerful conversation, which would drive away my gloomy thoughts. "Well,

have you found him?" was heard Bolkhóv's voice from a corn-stalk tent, in which a candle was glimmering.

"I have brought him, your Honour!" was Nikoláev's reply in a heavy bass.

In the booth, Bolkhóv sat on a felt mantle, his coat being unbuttoned, and his cap off. Near him a samovár was boiling, and a drum stood with a lunch upon it. A bayonet, with a candle on it, was stuck in the ground. "Well, how do you like this?" he said, proudly, surveying his cosy little home. Indeed, the booth was so comfortable, that at tea I entirely forgot the dampness, the darkness, and Velenchúk's wound. We talked about Moscow and about objects that had no relation whatsoever to the war and to the Caucasus.

After one of those minutes of silence, which frequently interrupt the most animated conversations, Bolkhóv glanced at me with a smile.

"I suppose our morning conversation must have appeared very strange to you?" he said.

"No. Why should it? All I thought was that you were very frank, whereas there are some things which we all know but which one ought not to mention."

"Not at all! If I had a chance of exchanging this life for a most wretched and petty life, provided it were without perils and service, I should not consider for a minute."

"Why do you not go back to Russia?" I said.

"Why?" he repeated. "Oh, I have been thinking of it quite awhile. I cannot return to Russia before receiving the Anna and the Vladímir crosses, — the Anna decoration around my neck and a majorship, as I had expected when I came out here."

"But why should you, when, as you say, you feel unfit for the service here?"

"But I feel myself even more unfit to return to Russia in the condition in which I left it. This is another tradi-

tion, current in Russia and confirmed by Pássek, Slyeptsóv, and others, that all one has to do is to come to the Caucasus, in order to be overwhelmed with rewards. Everybody expects and demands this of us; and here I have been two years, have taken part in two expeditions, and have not received anything yet. I have so much egotism that I will not leave this place until I am made a major with the Vladímir and Anna around my neck. I have got so far into this, that nothing will mortify me so much as to have Gnilokíshkin get this promotion, and me not get one. Then again, how can I show up in Russia before my elder, the merchant Kotélnikov, to whom I sell my grain, before my Moscow aunt, and before all those gentlemen, after two years in the Caucasus, without any advancement? It is true, I do not care to know these gentlemen, and, no doubt, they care very little for me; and yet a man is so built that, although he does not care one bit for such gentlemen, he wastes the best years, the whole happiness of his life, and his whole future on account of them."

XI.

JUST then the voice of the commander of the battalion was heard outside the tent: "With whom are you there, Nikoláy Fédorovich?"

Bolkhóv gave him my name, and thereupon three officers entered the booth: Major Kirsánov, the adjutant of his battalion, and the captain, Trosénko.

Kirsánov was a short, plump man, with a black moustache, ruddy cheeks, and sparkling eyes. His small eyes were the most prominent feature of his face. Whenever he laughed, all there was left of them were two moist little stars, and these stars, together with his stretched lips and craning neck, assumed a very strange expression of blankness. Kirsánov conducted himself in the army better than anybody else; his inferiors did not speak ill of him, and his superiors respected him, although the common opinion was that he was exceedingly dull. He knew his duties, was exact and zealous, always had money, kept a carriage and a cook, and very naturally knew how to pretend that he was proud.

"What are you chatting about, Nikoláy Fédorovich?" he said, upon entering.

"About the amenities of the service in the Caucasus."

But just then Kirsánov noticed me, a yunker, and, to let me feel his importance, he asked, as though not hearing Bolkhóv's answer, and glancing at the drum:

"Are you tired, Nikoláy Fédorovich?"

"No, we —" Bolkhóv began.

But again the dignity of the commander of the battalion seemed to demand that he should interrupt and propose a new question.

"Was it not a fine engagement we had to-day?"

The adjutant of the battalion was a young ensign, who had but lately been promoted from yunker, — a modest and quiet lad, with a bashful and good-naturedly pleasant face. I had seen him before at Bolkhóv's. The young man used to call on him often, when he would bow, take a seat in the corner, for hours roll cigarettes and smoke them in silence, get up again, salute, and walk away. He was a type of a poor Russian yeoman, who had selected the military career as the only possible one with his culture, and who placed the calling of an officer higher than anything else in the world, — a simple-hearted, pleasing type in spite of its ridiculous inseparable appurtenances, the tobacco-pouch, the dressing-gown, the guitar, and the moustache brush, with which we are accustomed to connect it. They told of him in the army that he had boasted of being just, but severe with his orderly, that he had said, "I rarely punish, but when I am provoked they had better look out," and that, when his drunken orderly had stolen a number of things of him and had even begun to insult him, he had brought him to the guard-house, and ordered him to be chastised, but that when he saw the preparations for the punishment, he so completely lost his composure that he was able only to say, "Now, you see — I can — " and that in utter confusion he ran home, and never again was able to look straight into the eyes of his Chernóv. His comrades gave him no rest, and teased him about it, and I had several times heard the simple-minded lad deny the allegation, and, blushing up to his ears, insist that it was not only not true, but that quite the opposite was the fact.

The third person, Captain Trosénko, was an old Caucasus soldier in the full sense of the word, that is, a man

for whom the company which he was commanding had become his family, the fortress where the staff was stationed his home, and the singers his only amusement in life, — a man for whom everything which was not the Caucasus was worthy of contempt, and almost undeserving belief; but everything which was the Caucasus was divided into two halves, ours, and not ours; the first he loved, the second he hated with all the powers of his soul, and, what is most important, he was a man of tried, quiet bravery, rare kindness of heart in relation to his comrades and inferiors, and of an aggravating straightforwardness and even rudeness in relation to adjutants and *bonjours*, whom he for some reason despised. Upon entering the booth, he almost pierced the roof with his head, then suddenly lowered it, and sat down on the ground.

"Well?" he said, and, suddenly noticing my unfamiliar face, he stopped, gazing at me with his turbid, fixed glance.

"So, what were you talking about?" asked the major, taking out his watch and looking at it, though I was firmly convinced that there was no need for his doing so.

"He was asking me why I was serving here."

"Of course, Nikoláy Fédorovich wants to distinguish himself here, and then go back home."

"Well, you tell me, Abrám Ilích, why do you serve in the Caucasus?"

"Because, you see, in the first place, we are all obliged to serve. What?" he added, though all were silent. "Yesterday I received a letter from Russia, Nikoláy Fédorovich," he continued, evidently desiring to change the subject. "They write to me — they make such strange inquiries."

"What inquiries?" asked Bolkhóv.

He laughed.

"Really, strange questions — they want to know

whether there can be any jealousy without love — What?" he asked, looking at all of us.

"I say!" said Bolkhóv, smiling.

"Yes, you see, it is good in Russia," he continued, as though his phrases naturally proceeded each from the previous one. "When I was in Tambóv in '52, I was everywhere received like an aid-de-camp. Will you believe me, at the governor's ball, when I entered, don't you know, I was beautifully received. The wife of the governor, you know, talked with me and asked me about the Caucasus, and all — really I did not know — They looked at my gold sabre as at a rarity, and they asked me what I got the sabre for, and for what the Anna cross, and for what the Vladímir cross, and I told them — What? — This is what the Caucasus is good for, Nikoláy Fédorovich!" he continued, not waiting for an answer. "There they look at us, Caucasus officers, very well. Young man, you know, a staff-officer with an Anna and a Vladímir cross, — that means a great deal in Russia — What?"

"I suppose you did a little bragging, Abrám Ilích?" said Bolkhóv.

"He-he!" he laughed his stupid smile. "You know one must do that. And I did feast during those two months!"

"Is it nice there, in Russia?" asked Trosénko, inquiring about Russia as though it were China or Japan.

"Yes, it was an awful lot of champagne we drank during those two months!"

"I don't believe it. You must have drunk lemonade. If I had been there, I would have burst drinking, just to show them how officers of the Caucasus drink. My reputation would not be for nothing. I would have showed them how to drink — Hey, Bolkhóv?" he added.

"But you, uncle, have been for ten years in the Caucasus," said Bolkhóv, "and do you remember

what Ermolóv said? And Abrám Ilích has been only six —"

"Ten years? It is nearly sixteen."

"Bolkhóv, let us have some of your sage. It is damp, brrrr! Hey?" he added, smiling. "Let us have a drink, major!"

But the major was dissatisfied with the first remarks of the old captain, and now was even more mortified, and sought a refuge in his own grandeur. He tuned a song, and again looked at his watch.

"I will never travel to Russia," continued Trosénko, paying no attention to the frowning major. "I have forgotten how to walk and talk like a Russian. They will say, 'What monster is this that has arrived.' I say, this is Asia. Is it not so, Nikoláy Fédorovich? What am I to do in Russia? All the same, I shall be shot some day here. They will ask, 'Where is Trosénko?' Shot. What are you going to do with the eighth company — eh?" he added, addressing the major all the time.

"Send the officer of the day along the battalion!" shouted Kirsánov, without replying to the captain, though I was again convinced that he had no orders to give.

"I suppose you are glad, young man, that you are receiving double pay now?" said the major, after a few minutes' silence, to the adjutant of the battalion.

"Of course, very much so."

"I find that our pay is now very large, Nikoláy Fédorovich," he continued. "A young man can live quite decently, and even allow himself some luxuries."

"No, really, Abrám Ilích," timidly said the adjutant, "though the pay is double, yet — one must keep a horse —"

"Don't tell me that, young man! I have myself been an ensign, and I know. Believe me, one can live, with

proper care. Now, figure up," he added, bending the little finger of his left hand.

"We take all our pay in advance, — so here is your calculation," said Trosénko, swallowing a wine-glass of brandy.

"Well, what do you want for that — What?"

At this moment a white head with a flat nose was thrust through the opening of the booth, and a sharp voice with a German accent said:

"Are you here, Abrám Ilích? The officer of the day is looking for you."

"Come in, Kraft!" said Bolkhóv.

A long figure in the coat of the general staff squeezed through the door, and began to press everybody's hands with great fervour.

"Ah, dear captain! you are here, too?" he said, addressing Trosénko.

The new guest, in spite of the darkness, made his way toward him, and to the captain's great surprise and dissatisfaction, as I thought, kissed his lips.

"This is a German who wants to be a good comrade," I thought.

XII.

My supposition was soon confirmed. Captain Kraft asked for some brandy, calling it by its popular name, and clearing his throat terribly, and throwing back his head, drained the wine-glass.

"Well, gentlemen, we have crisscrossed to-day over the plains of the Chechnyá," he began, but, upon noticing the officer of the day, he grew silent, so as to give the major a chance to give his orders.

"Well, have you inspected the cordon?"

"I have, sir."

"Have the ambushes been sent out?"

"They have been, sir."

"Then communicate the order to the commanders of the companies to be as cautious as possible!"

"Yes, sir."

The major closed his eyes and became thoughtful.

"Tell the people that they may now cook their grits."

"They are cooking them now."

"Very well. You may go."

"Well, we were figuring out what an officer needed," continued the major, with a condescending smile, addressing us. "Let us figure out!"

"You need one uniform and a pair of trousers. Is it not so?"

"Yes, sir."

"Let us call it fifty roubles for two years; consequently, this makes twenty-five roubles a year for clothes; then for board forty kopeks a day. Is that right?"

"Yes; it is even too much."

"Well, let us suppose it. Then, for the horse with the saddle for the remount, thirty roubles, — that is all. That makes in all twenty-five, and one hundred and twenty, and thirty, equal to one hundred and seventy-five roubles. There is still left enough for luxuries, for tea and sugar, and for tobacco, — say twenty roubles. Don't you see? Am I right, Nikoláy Fédorovich?"

"No, excuse me, Abrám Ilích!" timidly remarked the adjutant. "Nothing will be left for tea and sugar. You figure one pair for two years, whereas in these expeditions you can't get enough pantaloons. And the boots? I wear out a pair almost every month. Then the underwear, the shirts, the towels, the sock-rags, all these have to be bought. Count it up and nothing will be left. Upon my word, it is so, Abrám Ilích."

"Yes, it is fine to wear sock-rags," Kraft suddenly remarked after a moment's silence, with special delight pronouncing the word "sock-rags." "You know it is so simple, so Russian!"

"I will tell you something," said Trosénko. "Count as you may, it will turn out that we fellows ought to be shelved, whereas in reality we manage to live, and to drink tea, and to smoke tobacco, and to drink brandy. After you have served as long as I have," he continued, addressing the ensign, "you will learn how to get along. Do you know, gentlemen, how he treats his orderly?"

And Trosénko, almost dying with laughter, told us the whole story of the ensign with his orderly, although we had heard it a thousand times before.

"My friend, what makes you look like a rose?" he continued, addressing the ensign, who was blushing, perspiring, and smiling so that it was a pity to look at him.

"Never mind, I was just like you, and yet I have turned out to be a fine fellow. You let a young fellow from Russia get down here, — we have seen some of them,

— and he will get spasms and rheumatism, and all such things! But I am settled here, — here is my house, my bed, and everything. You see — "

Saying which, he drained another wine-glass of brandy.

"Ah!" he added, looking fixedly into Kraft's eyes.

"This is what I respect! This is a genuine old Caucasus officer! Let me have your hand!"

Kraft pushed us all aside, made his way toward Troséнko, and, grasping his hand, shook it with much feeling.

"Yes, we may say that we have experienced everything here," he continued. "In the year '45 — you were there, captain? — do you remember the night of the 12th which we passed knee-deep in the mud and how the next day we went into the abatis? I was then attached to the commander-in-chief, and we took fifteen abatises in one day. Do you remember it, captain?"

Troséнko made a sign of confirmation with his head, and closed his eyes, and protruded his lower lip.

"So you see — " began Kraft, with much animation, and making inappropriate gestures while addressing the major.

But the major, who no doubt had heard the story more than once, suddenly looked with such dim, dull eyes at his interlocutor that Kraft turned away from him and addressed Bolkhóv and me, glancing now at one, now at the other. At Troséнko he did not once look during his recital.

"So you see, when we went out in the morning, the commander-in-chief said to me, 'Kraft, take the abatises!' You know, our military service demands obedience without reflection, — so, hand to the visor, 'Yes, your Excellency!' and off I went. When we reached the first abatis I turned around and said to the soldiers, 'Boys, courage! Look sharp! He who lags behind will be cut down by my own hand.' With a Russian soldier, you know, you must speak plainly. Suddenly — a shell. I looked, one

soldier, another soldier, a third, then bullets — whizz! whizz! whizz! Says I, 'Forward, boys, after me!' No sooner had we reached it, you know, we looked, and there I saw that — you know — what do you call it?" and the narrator waved his arms in his attempt to find the proper word.

"A ditch," Bolkhóv helped him out.

"No — ah, what is it called? My God! Well, what is it? — a ditch," he said, hurriedly. "We, 'Charge bayonets!' — Hurrah! Ta-ra-ta-ta-ta! Not a soul of the enemy. You know we were all surprised. Very well. We marched ahead, — the second abatis. That was another matter. We were now on our mettle. No sooner did we walk up than we saw, I observed, the second abatis, — impossible to advance. Here — what do you call it, well, what is that name? — ah, what is it? —"

"Again a ditch," I helped him out.

"Not at all," he continued, excitedly. "No, not a ditch, but — well, what do you call it?" and he made an insipid gesture with his hand. "Ah, my God! What do you call it?"

He was apparently suffering so much that we wanted to help him out.

"Maybe a river," said Bolkhóv.

"No, simply a ditch. But the moment we went up there was such a fire, a hell —"

Just then somebody asked for me outside the tent. It was Maksímov. Since there were thirteen other abatises left after having listened to the varied story of the first two, I was glad to use this as an excuse for leaving for my platoon. Trosénko went out with me. "He is lying," he said to me after we had walked several steps away from the booth, "he never was in the abatises," and Trosénko laughed so heartily that I, too, felt amused.

XIII.

It was dark night, and the fires dimly illuminated the camp, when I, having put everything away, walked up to my soldiers. A large stump was glimmering on the coals. Three soldiers only were sitting around it: Antónov, who was turning around on the fire a little kettle in which hardtack soaked in lard was cooking, Zhdánov, who was thoughtfully poking the ashes with a stick, and Chíkin, with his eternally unlighted pipe. The others had already retired for their rest, some under the caissons, others in the hay, and others again around the fires. In the faint light of coals I could distinguish the familiar backs, legs, and heads; among the latter was also the recruit, who was lying close to the fire and was apparently asleep. Antónov made a place for me. I sat down near him and lighted my pipe. The mist and the pungent smoke from the green wood was borne through the air, and made my eyes smart, and the same damp mist drizzled down from the murky sky.

Near us could be heard the even snoring, the crackling of the branches in the fire, a light conversation, and occasionally the clattering of the infantry muskets. All about us glowed the fires, illuminating in a small circle the black shadows of the soldiers. At the nearest fires I could distinguish in the lighted spaces the figures of naked soldiers waving their shirts over the very fire. Many other men were not asleep, but moving about and speaking in the space of fifteen square fathoms; but the dark, gloomy night gave a peculiar, mysterious aspect to

all this motion, as though all felt this melancholy quiet and were afraid to break its tranquil harmony. When I began to speak, I felt that my voice sounded quite differently; in the faces of all the soldiers who were sitting near the fire I read the same mood. I thought that previous to my arrival they had been speaking of their wounded companion, but that was not at all the case: Chíkin was telling about the reception of goods at Tiflís, and about the schoolboys of that city.

Always and everywhere, but especially in the Caucasus, have I noticed the peculiar tact of our soldiers, who, during peril, pass over in silence and avoid all such things as might unhappily affect the minds of their comrades. The spirit of the Russian soldiers is not based, like the bravery of the southern nations, on an easily inflamed, and just as easily extinguished, enthusiasm. They do not need effects, speeches, military cries, songs, and drums; they need, on the contrary, quiet, order, and the absence of all banality. In Russian, real Russian, soldiers, you will never observe vain bragging, posing, a desire to obscure themselves and to excite themselves in time of danger; on the contrary, modesty, simplicity, and an ability to see in a danger something else than the danger itself, are the distinctive features of their character.

I have seen an outrider, who had been wounded in his leg, in the first moment express his regrets only for the torn fur coat, and then creep out from under the horse, which had been killed under him, and loosen the straps, in order to take off the saddle. Who does not remember the incident at the siege of Gérgebel, when the fuse of a bomb which had just been filled caught fire in the laboratory, and the artificer told two soldiers to take the bomb and run away as fast as possible, in order to throw it into a ditch; the soldiers did not throw it away in the nearest place, which was not far from the colonel's tent, which stood over the ditch, but carried it farther away,

not to wake the gentlemen who were sleeping in the tent, and so they were both torn to pieces. I remember how, during frontier service in 1852, one of the young soldiers, for some reason, remarked during an action, that he thought the platoon would never come out alive from it, and how the whole platoon angrily upbraided him for such evil words, which they would not even repeat.

Even now, when the thought of Velenchúk ought to have been in everybody's mind, and when any moment a volley might be fired by Tartars creeping up to the camp, everybody was listening to Chíkin's animated story, and nobody recalled the action of the morning, nor the imminent danger, nor the wounded man, as though all that had happened God knows how long ago, or not at all. But it seemed to me that their faces were a little more melancholy than usual; they did not listen very attentively to Chíkin's story, and even Chíkin felt that he was not listened to, and kept talking from mere force of habit.

Maksímov went up to the fire and sat down near me. Chíkin made a place for him, grew silent, and again started sucking his pipe.

"The foot-soldiers have sent to camp for brandy," said Maksímov, after a considerable silence. "They have just returned." He spit into the fire. "An under-officer told me that he saw our man."

"Well, is he still alive?" asked Antónov, turning his kettle.

"No, he is dead."

The recruit in the small red cap suddenly raised his head above the fire, for a moment looked fixedly at Maksímov and at me, then swiftly lowered his head, and wrapped himself in his overcoat.

"You see, death did not come to him for nothing this morning, as I was waking him in the park," said Antónov.

"Nonsense!" said Zhdánov, turning around a glowing stump, and all grew silent.

Amid a universal silence, there was heard a shot behind us in the camp. Our drummers took note of it, and gave the tattoo. When the last roll died down, Zhdánov was the first to rise; he took off his cap, and we all followed his example.

Amid the deep hush of the night was heard the harmonious chorus of male voices:

"Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth. Give us to-day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil."

"It was in the year '45 that one of our men was contused in the same spot," said Antónov, after we had put on our caps, and had seated ourselves again at the fire. "We carried him for two days on the ordnance — Zhdánov, do you remember Shevchénko? We left him there under a tree."

Just then an infantry soldier, with immense whiskers and moustache, and wearing his cartridge-box, walked over to us.

"Countrymen, may I have some fire to light my pipe with?" he said.

"Light it, there is plenty of fire here," remarked Chíkin.

"Countryman, you are, I suppose, telling about Dargí," the foot-soldier said, turning to Antónov.

"Yes, about the year '45, at Dargí," replied Antónov.

The foot-soldier shook his head, closed his eyes, and squatted down near us.

"It was dreadful there," he remarked.

"Why did you leave him?" I asked of Antónov.

"He had terrible pain in his abdomen. As long as we stood still, it was all right; but the moment we moved, he shrieked terribly. He entreated us to leave him, but we pitied him. But when *he* began to harass us, and

had killed three men on our guns, and an officer, and we had gone astray from our battery, it was terrible, — we thought we should never get the gun away. It was so muddy."

"The worst was, it was muddy at Indian Mountain," remarked a soldier.

"Well, and he grew worse! Then we considered, — Anóshenka and I, — Anóshenka was an old gun-sergeant, — that he could not live anyway, and that he invoked God to leave him. And so we concluded we would do so. There was a branching tree growing there. We put down near him soaked hardtack, — Zhdánov had some, — and leaned him against the tree; we put a clean shirt on him, bade him farewell, as was proper, and left him."

"Was he a good soldier?"

"A pretty good one," remarked Zhdánov.

"God knows what became of him," continued Antónov. "We left many soldiers there."

"In Dargí?" said the foot-soldier, rising and poking his pipe, and again closing his eyes and shaking his head. "Yes, it was terrible there."

And he went away from us.

"Are there many soldiers in the battery who have been at Dargí?" I asked.

"Well! Zhdánov, I, Patsán, who is now on leave of absence, and six or seven other men. That is all."

"I wonder whether Patsán is having a good time on his leave of absence," said Chíkin, stretching out his legs and putting his head on a log. "It will soon be a year since he left."

"Did you take the annual leave?" I asked Zhdánov.

"No, I did not," he answered, reluctantly.

"But it is good to go," said Antónov, "when one is from a well-to-do house, or still able to work. It is pleasant, and people at home are glad to see you."

"What use is there in going, when there are two

brothers?" continued Zhdánov. "They have enough to do to support themselves, so what good would one of us soldiers be to them? A man is a poor helper when he has been a soldier for twenty-five years. And who knows whether they are alive?"

"Have you not written to them?" I asked.

"Of course I have! I have written them twice, but they have not yet answered. They are either dead, or they simply don't care to answer, which means, they are poor, and have no time."

"How long ago did you write?"

"When I came back from Dargí, I wrote my last letter!"

"Sing the song of the 'Birch-tree,'" Zhdánov said to Antónov, who, leaning on his knees, was humming a song.

Antónov sang the "Birch-tree" song.

"This is Uncle Zhdánov's favourite song," Chíkin said to me in a whisper, pulling me by the overcoat. "Many a time, when Filípp Antónych sings it, he weeps."

Zhdánov sat at first motionless, his eyes directed on the glowing coals, and his face, illuminated by the reddish light, looked exceedingly melancholy; then his cheeks under his ears began to move faster and faster, and finally he got up, spread out his overcoat, and lay down in the shadow, behind the fire. It may be the way he was tossing and groaning, or Velenchúk's death and the gloomy weather had so affected me, but I really thought he was crying.

The lower part of the stump, changed into coal, flickered now and then and illuminated Antónov's figure, with his gray moustache, red face, and his decorations on the overcoat thrown over him, or lighted up somebody's boots or head. From above, drizzled the same gloomy mist; in the air was the same odour of dampness and smoke; all around me were seen the same bright points of dying fires, and were heard amid a general silence the sounds

of Antónov's melancholy song; and whenever it stopped for a moment, its refrain was the sounds of the faint nocturnal motion of the camp, of the snoring, of the clattering of the sentries' guns, and of subdued conversation.

"Second watch! Makatyúk and Zhdánov!" shouted Maksímov.

Antónov stopped singing; Zhdánov rose, sighed, stepped across a log, and slowly walked over to the guns.

June 15, 1855.

THE END.

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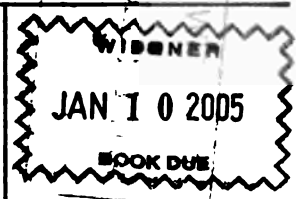

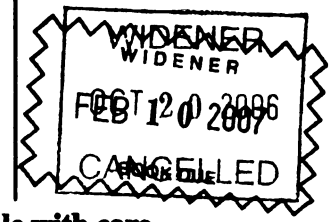

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